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Annice Wynkoop, artist

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Mr. Bamford, with Nan and Harriet on either arm, passed through the garden.

Frontispiece

Annice Wynkoop

ANNICE WYNKOOP ARTIST

THE PERSEVERANCE OF A COUNTRY GIRL

By ADELAIDE L. ROUSE



Perseverance and tact are the
two great qualities most valuable
for all who would succeed
in life."

A. L. BURT COMPANY,
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Lucy Osgood fund

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ANNICE WYNKOOP, ARTIST.

CHAPTER I.

THE youngest Wynkoop girl stood at the back gate, the wind blowing her yellow hair about her ears. It was a spring wind, full of restlessness and longing, and Nan Wynkoop—her real name was Annice,—felt it. She had raked up the dead leaves and made a bonfire, but the fire had been out for several minutes, while she stood at the gate, thinking as seriously as she had ever done in all her nineteen years. And Nan was a serious-minded young woman, despite her crinkly yellow hair, and general air of “highty-tighty,” as Grandma Wynkoop called it.

Perhaps if it had been a fall wind Nan would have had different thoughts. The spring winds and the spring odors arouse all the gipsy in us. We don't want to stay where we are “put,” but we want to try new adventures, and go, go, almost anywhere. Old Chaucer expressed all this with:—

“Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages.”

Nan felt adventurous. She sniffed at the woodsy odors that came from the grove across the road, and fell to thinking again so hard that she wrinkled her forehead as badly as Grandma Wynkoop herself.

"I'll do it, I must do it!" and she stamped the slim foot in the shabby russet shoe. "There! It is settled, and it has got to stay settled." Then she went back to the bonfire.

"Out, I declare," and Nan poked one of the embers with her foot. "I shall have to light it again." After the fire was burning a new idea seemed to strike her. She ran into the house and went into a small bedroom off the kitchen.

After a brief dialogue a man's voice said, "Well, I suppose you may if you think best. I don't know as they will ever do anybody any good."

"Of course they won't, and it will do me a great deal of good to burn them."

"What are you going to do, Nan?" called Emma Anna from the sitting-room, where she was bending over Mrs. Harper's new basque.

But Nan was already flying up the attic stairs. Presently a long roll which looked like a map or a chart flew out of the window. Another followed, and then another, till twenty-six lay in the yard.

In a second Nan was there herself, and had popped one of the charts into her bonfire.

Mrs. Wynkoop came to the kitchen door with

a rolling-pin in her hand. "Why, Nan, child, what are you up to?"

"Burning Smith's Illustrated Chart of the World's History, that is all," and a second chart went into the fire.

"But wait; it isn't right. You oughtn't to do it."

"Why not? They are good for nothing, and Pa said I could burn them. Now, Ma, don't say anything, or he'll change his mind. And don't let Charlotte hear of it, or she will try to stop me. She is so stingy."

"It doesn't seem right to destroy property in this way."

"Why not? Pa paid for them, and I have often heard you sigh over what they cost. I should think you would be glad to have them out of your sight."

"It may be a good thing to keep them in the house to sort of hold over your Pa's head in case he should take a notion to canvass again."

"There is something in that, but I think he has had enough of canvassing," added Nan, hopefully. "The charts will make a beautiful bonfire, that will be the only thing they ever were good for."

"Well, I'll take out five or six, and you may burn the rest, but it doesn't seem right."

Mrs. Wynkoop went back to her pie-crust, not very well satisfied, and Nan worked hard. In a few minutes all the charts were on the

funeral pyre. Then she danced around it, singing and waving her arms. She looked like a priestess of some mysterious order, in her red cape, and red Tam o' Shanter, with the yellow hair flying about her shoulders.

Charlotte came through the back gate, and stopped in amazement. "Nan, you grow wilder every day you live."

"Haven't I a right to be wild in my own back yard? I behave myself usually, ma'am. This is a special occasion, and it calls for special demonstration."

"What are you burning? It smells like varnish or paint."

"I should think it might. I've burned all of Pa's old charts." And Nan began her dance and incantations again.

"It is a shame," said Charlotte. "I wonder that Pa let you burn them."

"I think he was glad enough to get rid of them."

"But what put the idea in your head?"

"Oh, the air. It's so—something that makes one want to do new things. I've had a beautiful time out here this morning, all by myself, and I have settled my affairs. There is nothing like fresh air to make one see things clearly."

"I hope you have made up your mind to take the Pine Ridge school." Charlotte spoke anxiously.

"No; I shall never teach. There is no use in talking about it, Charlotte, I hate teaching so that

I have no business with it. Can't you see that? I have too much conscience to do anything as poorly as I should do teaching. But as I said, I have made up my mind—"

"To what?" asked Charlotte sharply.

"To go to New York in the fall and study art."

Poor Charlotte, if a bomb had struck her she could not have clutched the peach-tree more closely. Nan was very quiet after she had fired her heaviest gun, and nothing was heard but the saucy caw of a crow wheeling overhead.

Presently Emma Anna came to the kitchen window and tapped with her thimble.

"Dinner is ready," said Charlotte, finding her breath at last, and she started for the house. Nan slowly followed her, feeling more than half frightened at the boldness of her plan, and wondering if she would have the courage to carry it out.

She took her place at the table and ate her share of fried ham and boiled potato and squash in silence. When the plates of dried-apple pie began to circulate, she opened her mouth, and by a great effort, delivered herself of the news which had frightened Charlotte a few moments before.

If Nan had enjoyed creating a sensation she would have had her fill that day. The rest of the family were as speechless as Charlotte, except Mr. Wynkoop, who had not understood, and who called from the bedroom.

"Who is going to New York?"

A groan was his only reply, when Nan explained. The silence grew oppressive, and, as if to end it, they all rose, the pie being finished, and left the table. Emma Anna went back to Mrs. Harper's basque, Charlotte began to gather the dishes together, and Mrs. Wynkoop sat down in the Boston rocker and did nothing, a most unusual procedure for her. The other member of the family, Harriet, had not yet come, and Charlotte put some dinner in the oven for her.

Nan took up the dish towel, intending to dry the dishes, but Charlotte gently took it away from her. Then Nan went into the sitting-room, where her mother still sat in the rocking chair. Emma Anna was putting the whalebones in the basque now.

The room was very hot from the airtight stove, and Nan's head began to ache. She had half a mind to go for a long tramp over the hill, yet she wanted to stay and have some one talk to her about her plan. She knew they would think her crazy; she expected open opposition, and a great deal of it; but she was not prepared for this silence.

"Have you any overcasting for me to do, Emma Anna?" she asked humbly,

Emma Anna bent to bite her thread and then shook her head.

Nan felt herself growing nervous. Would no one scold her? Perhaps her father would. She

went into the bedroom. "I am going for a walk, and I may stop at Uncle David's. Do you want to send any message to him?"

"No." And Mr. Wynkoop turned again to the county paper.

Nan put on her hat and strolled out to the barn. Two or three cats came up to her and rubbed themselves against her skirts. She stooped to stroke them, and she picked up the Maltese one and carried it with her. The old gray horse poked his nose out of his stall and neighed in friendly greeting. Nan patted him and fed him wisps of hay. "You are the only one who will talk to me, Billy. Every one else thinks I am a wretch, an ungrateful wretch. I am ostracized, if you know what that means, Billy."

Billy neighed again, and seemed to look as if he appreciated the situation.

"They would blame you too, Billy, if they knew that you took me to town where I got Miss Frost's letter. You deserve to be ostracized too."

Nan climbed into the haymow and gathered the eggs, and then went to look at the little chickens. She took one of the fluffy things in her lap and sat down in the barn door. The Maltese kitten, finding herself supplanted, went back to the mother cat.

"I wonder if they are right and I am wrong. Am I a selfish thing? I don't believe it. I don't expect any fun. I know I shall work harder

than if I taught school, but it will be my work, and that makes all the difference in the world. If I should teach a few years and then study art I would—No, I never would study at all if I waited. I would lose my interest as I would lose my youth. I would become like Charlotte and Emma Anna; they are afraid of things. Anything new frightens them. They lie awake half the night if they are going to a town ten miles away to shop. I won't be like them. I'll dare things, and I'll go to New York to study art. I have made up my mind again. Now I am going for a long walk. Nothing straightens me out like a good tramp."

Nan got up with such a rush that she frightened a sedate Brahma hen that had been pulling a fishworm out of the ground. She ran away, leaving the worm, and cackling a remonstrance. The worm was drawing itself back into its hole, but Nan walked away, and left the hen to finish its marketing.

A moment more, and she was well on her way down the road, her red cloak making a bright spot on the landscape. She climbed hills, never slackening her pace, and if a fence was in her way she climbed it without thinking that it was any effort. The dogs came out from the farmyards as she passed, and she called them all by name and stopped to pat their heads. She came back after an hour or two with her hands full of wild flowers, and a splendid glow on her cheeks.

After the flowers were arranged in vases and bowls, Nan ran up to her room. Formerly she had occupied a large room with Harriet, adjoining the one which belonged to Emma Anna and Charlotte, but this spring she had moved into a smaller room where she could "spread eagle" herself, as she explained to Harriet.

It was a bare little room, for furniture was scarce in the Wynkoop household. So Nan had set up housekeeping with the odds and ends she could pick up. Still, the room had an "air," as Nan told herself. The toilet table had been a soap box, or rather, two soap boxes, and Nan had draped them with some old dotted muslin, well darned and laundered. The little mirror was a cheap affair, which made Nan look as if she had incipient mumps in the left cheek, but she had draped more of the old muslin around it, and it made a very pretty dressing-table. The one window had a muslin curtain tied back with a green ribbon. There was a wide couch which served for a bed by night, and a divan by day. It was covered, while doing duty as a divan, with pale green calico, and it was heaped with pillows covered with calico or some other cotton goods, in all the tints of green. The pillows were stuffed with straw, for Nan could not indulge in down, but, as she said, the effect was the same, and she was very well satisfied with her "pillowy" place. The few books which the girl could call

her own were ranged on a home-made bookshelf, for Nan could do a bit of carpentry work upon occasion. She did not stop now to look at her room, though she was very proud of it. She opened a closet door and took out an armful of sketches, which she pinned on the wall. Then she sat down on the divan to study the pictures. Her face flushed and her eyes grew brighter.

"I can paint, I know it. Nan Wynkoop, my dear, there is no doubt that you are meant for an artist. I can't help being a little proud of you, my girl." And Nan kissed her hand to her own reflection in the mirror. "I shall make something of myself ; I am going to New York to study art. I am going this fall. I'll have nothing to wear, and I'll live on one meal a day, if need be, but I'll study, study. I would rather be as poor as a church mouse and be able to see things and feel like this than to be rich and not care for them. I am glad I am Nan Wynkoop, with red hair and old clothes."

A quick step outside was followed by a brisk rap. "Let me in, I want to see the new room."

"Oh, it is you, Harriet? Come in, of course, but you won't like my room. You'll say it is flighty like its inmate," said Nan, as if pitying Harriet's lack of appreciation.

Harriet was a large woman of twenty-eight. She was next in age to Nan, though there was a

gap of many years between their ages. She had an alert air, very different from the manner of the two older sisters. In this respect Nan resembled her. Harriet was the librarian of a town a few miles away, and she came home only once a week, spending Sunday with her family.

Nan's little room seemed to grow smaller when Harriet came in. She dropped down on the green couch and proceeded to take in the room.

"What are you having, an exhibition?"

"Yes, this is a private view. I wouldn't let any one else in. All the others would laugh, and I am not sure that you don't. I don't mind your laughing, though."

"Why?"

"Oh, because you understand me better than the others do. We are alike."

Harriet laughed. "Am I to consider that a compliment?"

"We are more adventurous than the rest. We like to *do* things. Some day you will fly away from that library and do something unexpected. Charlotte and Emma Anna will never do anything that they haven't always done. Harrie, were they all talking about me downstairs? They acted as if there had been a death in the house."

"I suppose mother would feel that half the house was gone if she let her baby go to New York."

"Oh, then they have told you," and Nan

breathed a sigh of relief. "Now, Harriet, don't try to pull a long face and try to freeze me out as the others do. I'm simply perishing to talk to some one. It isn't a crazy plan at all, but I wasn't allowed to explain myself. I wanted to be questioned, not snubbed. You'll listen, won't you, Harriet?"

"Yes;" and Harriet settled herself comfortably. "Now, go on and tell me how you expect to live in New York on nothing. We find it hard enough to do it here."

"There is Aunt Annice's money, and I'll never want it more than I do now."

"But you can't get your money till you are of age."

"Deacon Halleck will let me have it."

Harriet laughed. "Deacon Halleck and you are great cronies."

"The deacon appreciates me. I'm going to paint his portrait as soon as he is through planting and can take time to sit. I made a sketch of Mrs. Halleck for him, and he was delighted. It was good. I sketched her as she was paring potatoes for dinner, and the deacon said the polka-dots in her dress were as natural as life." Nan's eyes twinkled. "So I know he'll let me have the money to go and learn how to paint polka-dots."

"But Aunt Annice's money, all told, amounts only to three hundred dollars."

"Yes; but it will last a year, and by that time

I will know beyond a doubt whether I can paint or not."

"And if you can't?"

"I know I can."

"I think you have talent, Nannie, but if you find out that you haven't and your little money is all gone, what then? I am supposing a case."

"Then I'll come home and sew with Emma Anna, but I must know."

"I think you are right. If you feel about your art as you seem to, you can stand a few hardships while you are getting ready for your work."

"Feel about it," repeated Nan, getting on her feet, and spreading her hands out toward her pictures, "I couldn't express my feeling till I found this in Browning the other day:

" ' Could you write books,
Paint pictures ! One sits down in poverty
And writes and paints with pity for the rich.' "

Harriet nodded. "I know, or rather, I can imagine something of it. You have the artistic temperament, I believe."

"I have, and I can stand anything for the sake of art. I am so glad that you are going to stand by me, Harrie."

"I can't help wanting to stand by you, but perhaps I am doing wrong. You are a very

young girl to be alone in a great city, and you are much too good-looking," added Harrie, grimly.

"Thank you, ma'am. I am not a silly girl if I am young, and I will be very sensible. I will be good, Harrie, I truly will. I have thought a great deal this winter and spring, and I see I can't give this idea up. When I think about living,—no, I'll call it staying,—on here year after year, as Emma Anna and Charlotte do, I choke." And Nan tugged at her collar to loosen it. "It is such a gray life, and I won't settle down to it without a struggle. This morning I went to the post-office, and there was a letter from Miss Frost. She writes that there will be no summer class this summer, for she is going abroad with her brother. I felt desolate when I got as far as that, for I have been living along till summer should come. Then this is the part that made me so crazy to-day," and Nan took the letter from her pocket.

"'You positively must come to New York this winter. You are losing time, and every year is precious. If you can put your hands on a few hundred dollars, come by all means. You can get board as low as four dollars a week if you are willing to shut your eyes to some disagreeable things.'"

Nan put the letter in her pocket. "I can put my hands on three hundred dollars, and I am going in the fall. To-night I am going to apply

for entrance to the art school. Miss Frost advises me to do so at once."

So saying, Nan began to put away her sketches, and Harriet went to her room to write out her weekly report.

CHAPTER II.

ALTHOUGH Nan's family had tormented her by their silence at first, they soon found their voices, and expressed themselves very freely on the subject nearest to her heart. There was no specific thing that they dreaded, but, as Nan said, they were so in a rut that anything new frightened them. No one forbade her going to New York, so she wrote her application and sent it to the art school, but her mother went about her work singing China, which was a sign of the deepest depression of spirits. Mrs. Wynkoop always sang at her work, but the tunes she selected were usually of a cheerful nature. She seldom sang anything so lugubrious as China unless the interest on the mortgage failed to be forthcoming, or they lost a head of cattle. Nan listened to China for a day or two and wondered if she were selfish. Her little legacy would do so much for the family. Yes ; she told herself, that was one side, but there was another side. "Perhaps I can take good care of mother yet with my brush, but I know that if I stay here, year after year, I will never do anything but keep soul and body together."

Mr. Wynkoop did not express his feelings in

music, but he read Pope's "Essay on Man," and that indicated that he was in the depths. Usually he read nothing but the county paper. When he read Pope, which was one of the books which he had possessed as a young man, it was a sign that he felt the solemnity of life.

After a week or two the household relapsed into its usual ways. Mrs. Wynkoop sang Dundee, instead of China, and Mr. Wynkoop rattled his newspaper as usual. Nan guessed that they were comforting themselves with the thought that she would forget her whim, and be content to jog on with the rest of the family. "They will see that it is more than a whim," she would say to herself, as she dusted and washed dishes, made beds, and helped Emma Anna with her sewing. She seldom mentioned her plan, but, sleeping or waking, it was never out of her thoughts.

In the village parlance, the Wynkoop family were "unlucky." Jonas Wynkoop, as he was familiarly called, had never been a success at farming, even in the days when there was "money in it," and now the ninety rocky acres which were left of a once large farm did not begin to support the family. He had always hated farming, and had tried to do many other things, but after each attempt to better himself he had returned to the farm, poorer than ever. As the neighbors were wont to say when they enumerated his different experiments, "he had book-agented, kept grocery,

been a life insurance agent, and a horse doctor." Canvassing had been one of his favorite ventures, but whether he carried "The Illustrated Chart of the World's History," or "The American Lightning Eradicator," warranted to take spots out of everything, he never sold his goods. The charts lumbered up the attic, and the eradicator turned rancid in the woodshed. He simply had no faculty, as his more enterprising neighbors said.

It was thought a pity that there were no boys in the family. Four girls seemed like an affliction. Not that any of the older ones ate any idle bread; far from it. Emma Anna with her dressmaking, Charlotte with her teaching, and Harriet with her salary as librarian, had long kept the family fortunes up. Nan was the only one who was not a wage earner, and the villagers took it for granted that she would follow in Charlotte's steps and be a teacher. She had graduated from the high school the summer she was eighteen, and it was supposed that she would "take a school" in the fall.

She had always made pictures, from the time she spoiled her books at school with caricatures of the teachers. When she was older she picked berries and sold them to get money to buy her paints, and she had worked alone, with an occasional lesson from a local artist. Young and ignorant as Nan was, she guessed that she was better off without any teaching, and then for two

or three years she had no instruction whatever. The summer she was seventeen an art teacher from New York had a summer class near a neighboring town. Nan was familiar with her name, from the art criticism in the religious weekly which her father took. She selected some of her work, and with a palpitating heart went to the lady and asked her if she could ever learn to paint.

Nan was prepared for a great disappointment, but she was not ready for the answer she received.

"You know a good deal about painting already. Your coloring is quite remarkable. Drawing is your weak point: you need instruction, but your work is full of promise. Now tell me all about yourself,—what you have done, what you mean to do,—everything."

There was not much to tell, poor Nan! She lived in a little brown house, she had no money, but she wanted to paint.

"There are thousands of girls who can tell the same story," she said, with a quiver in her voice.

"Yes; but not more than a handful of them has the promise you show. I shall be glad to have you work with me, if you like, and let me say frankly that I wish to help you as one artist may help another. So let us say nothing of money. I see that you are independent, and you hesitate to take help from a stranger. Once I was just where

you are; and I had to let a stranger help me or give up the art I loved. I am glad that I can say I was sensible enough to accept help. I'll teach you now, and by and by you may pass the help on to some other girl.

"Good! So that is settled," said Miss Frost, when Nan had thanked her, somewhat awkwardly, it must be confessed. "What do you mean to paint, landscape or portraits?"

"Oh, portraits, by all means, if I can."

"There is no reason why you shouldn't. I should choose portrait painting if I didn't have more talent for landscape. When you go to New York you must study with a portrait teacher. Meantime you can learn something with me."

That summer went by on wings. Nan gave up everything else and worked with a feverish anxiety; she felt that it might be her only opportunity for instruction, and she made the most of it. It was only a small class, and the other pupils were very good-natured. They liked Nan and they helped her in many ways. She had the advantage of hearing the criticisms of the work of the others, and she never missed a word. Her progress surprised even Miss Frost, who had expected a good deal of the girl.

When the class broke up Nan felt that the world had come to an end. Miss Frost advised her by all means to continue her work, and to set

her heart on going to New York to study. In the mean time she would not forget her.

Nan thanked her with a quivering voice. At that time she saw no hope of going on with her work. She must teach school for her bread and shoes; art was a luxury not to be thought of. Her father could not help her, nor would she take assistance from any of her sisters. They were denying themselves many things so that they might keep the roof over their heads. Nan felt that she should apply for the Pine Ridge school and do her share toward bearing the family expenses. While she hesitated some one else secured the school. Nan took it as a sign that she was not to teach, and she shut herself in an attic room, which had nothing to recommend it for a studio but a north light.

She had painted steadily all the winter, going twice a month to a city thirty miles distant for a criticism. The neighbors calculated the expense of these trips, and guessed that Harriet paid for them. They did not approve of them. Nan could paint well enough now. Her pictures were good enough to send to the county fair, or to hang in the parlor. She never had sent any of her work to the fair, and it was suspected that she was too proud to do so. The Wynkoop family were called proud, though all the neighbors agreed that they had no reason to be; they had no money, nor no good furniture in their house.

Nan's family were naturally disappointed that she did not teach, but they said nothing to her, only now and then her mother would shake her head over the girl's shabby dresses, and tell her that she might dress like a lady if she would teach. Nan wore the old dresses cheerfully, and went on painting in her cold little room upstairs.

That winter an aunt for whom Nan was named died, leaving her a little legacy. To her that meant one thing,—a year in New York. Her mother and sisters wondered that she did not replenish her shabby wardrobe, but she would not touch a cent of the sum. Her painting improved every day after her hope for an opportunity for study became a possibility. She realized this herself, and she spent many happy hours in her cold little room. Often some one would climb the attic stair and rouse her, when she would realize that she was cold and tired and hungry.

As the spring advanced Nan's thoughts dwelt more and more on going to the city to study, but she hesitated to broach the subject to her family. It was an unpropitious time to make any new venture; the family were poorer than ever, if that were possible. Mr. Wynkoop had fallen from a barn while trying to shingle it to save carpenter's wages, and had broken his leg. This kept him helpless in the bedroom adjoining the sitting-room for weeks. The spring work on the farm was far behind, for the man whom Harriet

had hired took his own time and method of doing it. Mrs. Wynkoop looked more worried than usual. The interest on the mortgage had been raised by Charlotte and Emma Anna, so the nightmare of foreclosure was past for another year.

Mr. Wynkoop was the most cheerful member of the family during this trying time. Always ill with some mortal disease, he had "enjoyed poor health," ever since the children could remember. If the slightest ailment seized him the whole family had to wait on him; but this winter when he had been really ill, he had borne his pain with much patience.

Such being the state of affairs, Nan did not see how she could leave home and enter on a long and expensive period of study. Still, she reasoned, the worse circumstances were, the greater was the need for her to fit herself for supporting herself and helping others.

She was at the parting of three ways. School teaching would mean a living, but all her soul cried out for a chance to cultivate the gift which she felt had been given her. Still another way was open to her; she knew that, though she had not been told so in words. And this way was older than either art or schools; it was as old as the world. Before women had taught or painted they had "married and settled down." Every one in the town and in the farms around knew

that Mr. Bamford, the principal of the high school, was trying to "wait on" Nan Wynkoop. He had been in Macedonia two years, and during the first year Nan had been his pupil. During the second year he had done his best to woo this refractory ex-pupil. There were plenty of girls who had no art in their heads who were inclined to look with favor on the young pedagogue. Nan did not look on him with favor, which partly accounted for the ardor of his suit. What his intentions were was evident to the most obtuse of observers, though, so far, Nan had kept him from explaining them to her. Nan's family could not tell whether she was inclined to like Mr. Bamford or not. She made a good deal of fun of him, and declined to discuss the subject with seriousness. Surely life was full of interest to "the youngest Wynkoop girl," as she was usually called.

Nan did not include Mr. Bamford in her plans; she would either teach or paint. A letter from Miss Frost, going into detail about boarding-houses, art schools, and any expense which would be likely to come up, had settled Nan's mind once for all. She could have free instruction at Cooper Institute, and she could get board for four dollars a week. Aunt Annice's money would cover every expense. Nan was sure that she must go; she fought the battle over inch by inch, as she drove old Billy home that spring morning, and it was while the bonfire was burning that the matter

was settled, as we have seen. When her application for admission to Cooper was mailed, she ceased to worry about the matter. She painted less than usual during the summer, and devoted herself to sewing and housework, two things which she disliked as people with the artistic temperament only can dislike them.

CHAPTER III.

THE summer was gone, and autumn had begun to try its brushes on a few trees. Annice was not making bonfires, but she was very busy getting her clothes ready "to go to New York and study art." Poor girl, the thing itself was still the one thing to be desired, but she was very tired of having people speak to her about it. Nothing, she told Harriet, had made such a commotion since the druggist's daughter eloped with a tin-peddler.

Nan sat in the sitting-room this bright autumn afternoon, sewing on the blue serge which was to be her winter dress, and wondered if she was really going after all. It seemed too good to be true, and she lived in hourly expectation of something which would keep her home. She was so busy with her thoughts that she basted her sleeve upside down, and Emma Anna made her rip it.

"It is a good sign to rip a dress," said Nan cheerfully, "it is a sign that I will live to wear it out. I thought it looked a little queer, Emma Anna, but I didn't know what was the matter."

As Nan got up to find the scissors she heard wheels, and she went to the window to take ob-

servations. Mr. Bamford alighted and tied his horse to the hitching post in front of the house.

"'Froggy would a wooing go'," hummed Nan mischievously. "I suppose he wants me to go for a drive, a farewell drive, I am not sure that I ought to go without a chaperon."

Harriet came in just then to say that Mr. Bamford was in the parlor.

"You would better put on another dress, Nan, and your hair is tumbled."

"It usually is tumbled; it was made so. I suppose the professor wants to take me for a drive. It is proper to have a chaperon. Emma Anna's dressmaking paper says that a young woman should take her mother along when she goes buggy riding with a young man. I'm sure mother won't go, so you'll have to, Harrie."

"You would better hurry and change your dress," laughed Harriet. "Imagine Mr. Bamford's blank look if you were to propose taking me."

"Has the professor an arithmetic in his pocket? I suppose it would be prudent to take a slate and pencil along; he might ask me to do an example in partial payments, or to diagram a sentence. What should I do if he should ask me to parse 'Satan, than whom none higher sate.'"

Harriet pushed her. "Don't be so silly. Mr. Bamford is a nice young man, only he is a little teachery. You'll see the time, perhaps, when you

are a shabby artist, living on crackers, without cheese, that you'll wish that you were Mrs. Bamford, getting your living from the very teaching that you despise."

"I couldn't marry him; he would be sure to review me on the multiplication table, and I don't know my 'leven times yet. Don't look so stern, Harriet, it isn't becoming. I am going this minute. Bound Connecticut. Give the table for Troy weight. State the causes which led to the Revolutionary War. There, I think I have my mind somewhat limbered up. I hope I'll get a hundred on this examination."

Mr. Bamford and Nan took the road over the hills, and as the horse mounted the first spurs of the Catskills, he turned from a dissertation on geological formations to ask,

"When do you leave, Miss Annice?"

"Next Friday."

"Ah, I apprehended that this might be your last Saturday, and I could not let the opportunity slip. I trust you do not intend to remain long in New York."

"I shall stay till next spring, unless my money gives out," said the practical young woman by his side. "And if I can scrape together enough money I shall go on indefinitely."

"That will settle his mind," thought Nan, wickedly.

"I regret," said Mr. Bamford, speaking slowly,

"that you are to add to the long list of young women who are rushing to our large cities. Many are sure to meet with disappointment, for all can't succeed."

Nan bit her lip, but made no reply. The professor flicked a fly from the horse, and went on, "And if they do succeed, what then?"

"Why, success, of course," replied Nan, flipantly.

"Success, as I understand it, is a hollow thing. The women who are wearing out heart and brain and nerve in this mad struggle for success might rather be in the home of some good, honest man, fulfilling the offices God made them for."

"Mem.," thought Nan, "'never use a preposition to end a sentence with.'"

"You are very sure what God made women for," Nan said aloud, smiling a little. "I am not so sure. I think that people lay our lives out for us. How would you like to have your life laid out for you after a cut-and-dried plan? No man would stand it, and I fail to see why women should."

"They don't; more's the pity. There is something in the air,—a revolt from the good old ways of our mothers and grandmothers, and the foundations of society are shaken. I have no idea whether you will be successful or not, Miss Annice, but I cannot find it in my heart to hope that you will succeed. Perhaps you can guess why. It

may be a selfish reason, but I am not the first man to harbor selfishness of this kind."

"Please, Mr. Bamford, don't propose to me. I want to be able to say that I never refused you."

"The easiest thing in the world to do. Accept me."

"Don't pretend to misunderstand me. I want to be able to say that you have never proposed to me. You haven't yet, you know, so please stop," Nan repeated lamely.

"I won't ask you to marry me, now, Annice, but when the art fails please remember that there is a place for you in my heart, in my home. No one else can fill it, even though the art is so successful that you never give a thought to the lonely man who—"

"Mr. Bamford, I asked you not to go on. I think it is a shame to spoil my last view of these hills. You croak like a raven and wish me bad luck, and then tell me if I can't make a success of art to come back and wear aprons and make puddings. I may as well tell you that I hate to make puddings and I never wear aprons except painting aprons, and there are no strings to those. I was afraid you would say—things, and we would have an unpleasant time, and we have had it. Now please talk of something else. Do you see that woodbine over there, flung against the dark green of that tree?"

"I see," said the schoolmaster absently. "Annice, tell me, if you were to find out that you have no talent for painting would you keep on, just to—"

"But I have talent. I don't, for a moment, doubt it. I know that I can paint, just as you know that you can solve difficult problems in mathematics. I am not a child. Besides, those artists at the summer school last summer saw much promise in my work. Miss Frost ought to know what she is talking about, and she has been the means of my going to the city to study. I feel called; I have no right to neglect a gift, when I feel so about it."

"You are too young a girl to be away from your mother."

"I have common sense, and I dare say I can be trusted to behave myself."

"Where do you intend to live? Have you relatives in the city?"

"No. Since you insist on knowing, I will tell you all that I know. Miss Frost has engaged a boarding-place for me, and she will meet me at the station. So I think I shall be safe."

"You will write to me, Annice?"

"No; I prefer not to write. I dislike letter-writing, and I shall be exceedingly busy. This is life or death to me, Mr. Bamford, and I must put my whole mind on my work. You will come to see me next summer and I will show you how

much my painting has improved, and one of these days, I hope, you will bring Mrs. Bamford to see me."

Nan dared this much, because they had stopped before the house. He couldn't say anything then. But the professor gave her as good as he took.

"I shall never introduce Mrs. Bamford to you, Annice. I have a conviction that you will yet bear that name. I can wait. I never yet set my heart on anything that I did not get it, and I have set my heart on you, Nan Wynkoop."

Mr. Bamford had helped her from the buggy, and was prolonging the process of shaking hands as long as possible. "I hope you will keep well," he said stiffly, as he dropped her hand.

"Wish me success," said Nan, her eyes dancing.

"No; I will not say more than I feel. And since I have given bonds to keep the peace I may not say all I feel." And the schoolmaster gave his ex-pupil a searching look, which made her color rise for the first time that afternoon.

"Good-by," she said gaily. "You will see the day that you will tell your pupils that one of the most giddy girls that ever came to school to you is a great portrait painter." And Nan vanished into the house.

Supper was waiting, and Nan ate her share of it with a keen relish after her ride over the hills.

Once or twice during the meal her eyes were dewy as she realized that in a week from that time she would be gone, but she could not be unhappy. Her wings were beating against her narrow cage, and she was impatient to try them.

CHAPTER IV.

NAN was met at the Grand Central station by Miss Frost and another lady. Miss Frost seemed very glad to see Nan, and she introduced her to Miss Dunning as a most promising creature whom she had discovered. The two ladies had just come from a water-color exhibition, and they talked all the way downtown about the pictures, so Nan had nothing to divert her from the homesick feeling which was stealing over her. She was tired after her journey, and she longed to get into her own room and rest. She wondered what the room would be like. It must be small, of course, for she was to pay very little for it, but no matter how small it was it would be her own, and she would soon make it seem home-like with her own things.

“We get out here,” said Miss Frost, “it is only a tiny walk to your boarding-place. I hope you will like the arrangements I have made.”

A rather grim-looking maid opened the door of an old-fashioned house in answer to Miss Frost's ring. The parlor was a long room, fairly well furnished. In a conspicuous place on the wall was a framed notice, which called attention to

the fact that the inmates of this house were expected to conduct themselves in a quiet and lady-like manner. The maid came back in a moment and told Nan that her room was ready, and Miss Frost went up with her. The maid tapped at the door of a front room on the third floor. "Come in," said a voice, and the ladies followed her in. It was a large room, as large as the parlor below, and it was well that it was large, for it contained four beds, four washstands, a large table, and a number of chairs.

"This is your corner," said the maid, pointing to one of the little white beds. "This is your washstand, and I will show you where to hang your clothes. You'll have to unpack your things in the hall; trunks are not allowed in the rooms."

When the maid went out Nan turned to Miss Frost. "There must be some mistake; there are four beds here, and I thought I was to have a room alone. I never dreamed,—why, I must have a room alone."

"My dear child, I thought of course that you understood that at the price I named you would have to be satisfied with board in one of these houses. Christian Homes, they are called, and they are perfectly respectable. Indeed, you will find some very fine women here,—art students, like yourself, medical students, and teachers."

"It doesn't seem that I can stand it," said Nan, her voice quivering. "If I had known—"

"If you had known you would not have attempted to study art, you were going to say. Nonsense. You would have made the mistake of your life. I began just this way when I first studied, and I lived through it. Try it a while, and if you really find that you can't stand it I will see what can be done. For the price you pay here you can't get a room alone. Six dollars a week would be the least, and that would mean a hall room and no fire. Here you have fire, though I suppose you don't care to consider that inducement on such a warm evening. Now I must go. I want you to come to a tea at my studio to-morrow. I'll show you so many artistic people that you will be in love with New York. Good-by, then, till to-morrow."

A bell clashed in the hall below before Nan had finished washing her face and hands at the washstand that was said to be hers. A middle-aged woman had been in the room all the time, and now two more women came in. Nan was too heart-sick to care how many came, and they did not seem to mind her in the least. They gave her good evening, and one of them asked her pleasantly if she had just come to the city. The middle-aged woman, whom the others called Miss Tarbell, asked Nan if she was ready, and offered to show her the way to the dining-room. Nan thanked her and followed her downstairs till they reached the basement. They went through a long,

dark hall, piled high with trunks. Nan wondered if hers must go there too, and how she would ever get into it.

The tables were filled already, and the maids were dispensing soup. As she drank her soup Nan realized that she was hungry. The dinner consisted of boiled mutton, boiled potatoes, stewed tomatoes, with bread pudding and coffee for dessert. "I shouldn't have had any more at home," thought Nan. "I shouldn't have had so much, for we don't have soup every day, but everything would have been so different."

Most of the boarders ate their dinners with evident relish, though some complained that the mutton was tough, or the potatoes soggy. Some of the ladies had dressed for dinner, but most of them were just as they came from work. Nan tried to count them, and then fell to wondering what they all did "for their livings." Before the bread pudding was served she had a fair idea of the girls who sat near her, for they all talked "shop." Two medical students discussed a "subject" which they had dissected that day, with total disregard for the feelings of their neighbors. A young girl, evidently an art student, told that she had had a perfectly horrid criticism that afternoon. Another girl, with a sallow complexion, complained in loud tones of her indigestion, and the medical student in her last year prescribed for her. A sweet-faced woman, whom

Nan guessed to be a Christian Scientist, reproved her for admitting that she was not altogether well, thereby calling down on herself much good-natured banter. The public school teacher, who was one of Nan's room-mates, gave a detailed account of the visit of an objectionable special teacher, and was promptly silenced by her left-hand neighbor, who told her that no matter what her woes were, she had her Saturdays and a long vacation every summer, and asked her how she would like to click away at a typewriter forty-nine weeks in the year.

"There, they are at it again," said the girl next to Nan. "They are always having that over. I wish they would keep still. We all work hard enough all day, and it is a shame to have the troubles of the day over at dinner. What do you do?"

Nan was surprised for a moment. It was not long before it seemed quite the natural thing to ask what a girl did.

"I don't do anything," she stammered. "I am, that is, I am going to study art."

"Where? At the League?"

"No; at Cooper."

"That girl in the pink waist studies at the League. She does water color, and it is all one can hear from morning till night. She is in the room with me, so I am a victim. I came here to study art, but I soon gave it up."

"Why? Didn't you have talent?"

"Yes, as much as the average art student, but I found that art was very long and my funds were very short. I was considered a marvel in Petoskey. You don't know where Petoskey is? It is in Michigan, and my pictures were praised in the papers. After I came here I found what they were worth. I went to an art school and they set me to drawing from the cast. That is the first thing you do. You draw from the block till you have nothing left to live on, then you draw from the round. I didn't know how to draw at all; I had wasted my time drawing from the flat, copying pictures, you know, and it really was worse than doing nothing. I saw it would take years of work to begin to do anything, so I gave the whole thing up. I felt that the world had nothing left for me, but I have managed to get along very comfortably without art. I have money enough to live on, and that is more than I would have had if I had gone on with art."

"What is your business, if you don't mind my asking."

"Of course I don't. I am a bookkeeper. I learned in one winter, and I got a position right away. I have just come back from my vacation, and I came here for a few days, till I could find another boarding place. I shan't stay here long. What do you think of it? You needn't say; I have been watching you, and I know you think

it is dreadful. It is. If you can afford it go somewhere else. Don't stay in a C. H. unless you must."

"A C. H?" repeated Nan.

"Short for Christian Home. This is one; but of course you know. They all are run by some church or some organization, but you may depend that they don't lose anything by their philanthropy. They all are pretty much of a muchness; this one is the best, so far as the table is concerned. But we must go. Everyone else has gone, and the waitress is looking daggers at us.

"What room are you in? O yes; third floor front. Miss Tarbell is there, and Miss Stearns and Miss Jennings. Miss Tarbell is principal of one of the schools, and her salary is \$1,750 a year. Whatever she boards here for I don't know. Miss Stearns is a stenographer, and Miss Jennings is—I don't know what. Sometimes she 'book agents'; and sometimes she makes crayon portraits. She is quite a study."

"Are there four girls in every room?" Nan asked.

"No; sometimes there are more. In the room over the back parlor there are five girls; and this room, mind you, has no outside window, but it opens into an extension where there are two more girls. Don't look so shocked; they are very nice girls. Two of the five are medical students, one is an artist, one does drawing for a fashion mag-

azine, and the other is studying stenography. In the extension is another medical student and a city missionary. I wonder that the board of health isn't after that room, though none of the girls seem sickly. The very idea of people being huddled together like that is immoral. The world is big enough for every one to have a place of her own, and I believe the Lord meant it so when He made such a big world."

"Are there no smaller rooms where there are fewer girls?"

"Yes; a few rooms have partitions through them, and there are two girls on each side of the partition. But those rooms are always snapped right up; everybody wants one. There are hall-rooms, with two girls in each one. That is really worse than four in a large one."

Nan and her new acquaintance had gradually climbed the stairs as they talked, and now they halted before Nan's door.

"I hope you won't be very lonely. Let me know if I can do anything for you. What did you say your name is? I am Miss Jamieson. Good night."

Nan opened the door of the room where her bed was; she felt that she could not, even in her thoughts, call it her room. All of her room-mates were in; Miss Stearns sat by the lamp, trimming a hat, Miss Jennings was reading, and Miss Tarbell sat in the big rocking-chair, doing nothing.

Nan took from her bag some note-paper and her fountain-pen, Harriet's gift, and sat down to write home. She had no more than dated her letter, when some one rapped at the door. It was a maid, who said that Nan's trunk had come, and she must unpack it that night, for it must be carried down to the basement before breakfast.

Nan was too tired to move, but she went down and unpacked her dresses and a few other things which she was likely to need during the next few days. She would not take out everything, for she did not mean to stay. After three or four trips, she hung her dresses in the wardrobe, and put her other belongings in her bureau. Then she took up her pen again, and wrote rapidly, in a clear, bold hand, the library hand she had learned from Harriet.

"My Dear, Dear People,

"I am in New York, safe and sound, but I am in a big room with three other women, and we all are expected to sleep, wash, dress, and sit together. In some rooms there are five women, instead of four. I feel as if I were some one else, and not Nan Wynkoop at all. This is what Miss Frost meant when she wrote that I could get board for four dollars a week. She supposed that I understood all about it. It's simply awful. The girls all seem nice, but think of it, four people all huddled up together !

"There were at least seven thousand women in the dining-room to-night, all gabbling about art and medicine and type-writers and sewing-machines. The medical students talk about their dissecting, and one of them who sat near me smelled of carbolic. Horrible! I know I shall die. I would rather teach school, and that I always considered the last hope."

Nan suddenly stopped writing, and read her letter over. Then she tore it into bits, and wrote another one.

"My Dear People,

"I reached New York safely. Nothing happened on the journey, and Miss Frost met me and came down to the boarding-house with me. My quarters are comfortable,—literally, my quarter, thought poor Nan,—and I think the house quite as good as I can expect for the price I pay. My trunk has come, and I have unpacked some of my things. I will write more on Monday, after I have been to the art school. All write very soon, please. Love to everybody.

"NAN."

Nan did not close her eyes till long after midnight. When she was very sure that everybody was asleep, she had a good cry with her head well under the bed-clothes. Home seemed as far away

as if in another world. She could not believe that she was the same girl who had talked to Mr. Bamford on the sphere of women, and who had declared herself ready to suffer anything for art's sake.

CHAPTER V.

NAN was in the midst of a delightful dream about home when she was awakened by Miss Jennings, who was giving a graphic description of a new gown she was having made. Everything came back to Nan in an instant ; she was not in her little green and white nest, but in the big, bare room, with three other women. All were up, and more or less ready for breakfast. Nan lay still, thinking she would not rise till the others had gone down to breakfast.

But Miss Tarbell spoke. "Miss Wynkoop, you would better get up. If you are not down at the stated time the dining-room door will be locked, and the unfortunate young woman who is late may beat upon that door till she is tired ; Martha never opens it."

"Thank you," said Nan, and she at once began her toilet.

Many of the young women ate breakfast with their hats on. They seemed in a great hurry, and one or two who were not waited on at once went to business without any breakfast. Three-fourths of the boarders went into the kitchen after breakfast, and brought out a bag which con-

tained luncheon. Nan watched one girl examine hers. It proved to be a sandwich, a banana, and two ginger-snaps.

"Must every one carry luncheons?" Nan asked of her neighbor with whom she had talked the evening before.

"No; some of the girls come home. Those who work too far away to come home at noon carry their luncheons. How do you think you are going to like it? Not the lunch, but the C. H.?"

Nan shook her head. "I shall not stay. I am going out this very morning to look for a room. I can't stand being all huddled up together. I feel like an orphan asylum or something."

"You can't find anything else at this price, I'll tell you that before you look. Still, you can get a hall-room quite cheap. I'll go with you if you wait till afternoon. I have a half holiday."

"I should like to have you go with me, but I can't go this afternoon. I am going to Miss Frost's to a studio tea, and I don't want to be tired before I go. So I think I will start out alone right after breakfast."

"Is your Miss Frost the Jessica Frost who paints flowers so wonderfully? She is really quite distinguished."

"I suppose she is the one; her name is Jessica."

"You are in great luck to know her. She is a

great swell, and the girls are wild to get invited to her studio. I mean the girls who paint or think they can."

"I know Miss Frost very well. She had a summer class near my home, and I painted with her. It was she who encouraged me to come to New York."

"You'll be on your feet in no time if you are in with any well-known people. You would better look up a good boarding place. If you have a good address, no matter if your room is on the fifth floor, and a good gown or two, you'll get along."

"I am not counting on anything but hard work," said Nan, "so it doesn't matter where I live, except for my own comfort. I don't expect to know anybody."

"I imagine you will, and if you have the chance of any good times, take them; you will do all the better with your work for having a little fun. I'll look over the morning paper, if I can get my hands on it, and mark some advertisements for boarders. I know nearly all the boarding-houses around here. I'll give you a hint; don't go to any house where there is a folding-bed in the parlor."

"A folding-bed? I beg pardon for repeating your words, but why should anyone have a folding-bed in the parlor?"

"To sleep in, of course. Keep a sharp lookout,

if you are not used to these inventions, for they are in all forms,—cabinets, desks, sideboards, pianos, etc. You don't want to get in a house where there is one of these things in the parlor, and where the landlady comes in when you have company, and looks daggers at you, because she wants to put some one to bed in the folding-bed."

"I never saw a folding-bed in my life."

"You will, if you stay in New York. I have slept in every kind that ever was invented. I know I shall be killed by one yet, for I have had them go up with me, and fall down with me, to say nothing of having my back broken with springless ones. Here is the paper ; I'll mark some ads for you."

Nan copied the numbers, and soon after breakfast started out on her search. She went bravely from house to house, but in every case the answer was the same, there were no hall-rooms to be had. Landladies explained that vacations were over, and people had come back from the country, so the hall-rooms were eagerly snapped up.

One of the houses was for furnished rooms only. The landlady was very agreeable, and she showed Nan a room which she said was just what she wanted. Nan was by no means sure of that ; she had no idea of a place where she could not have her meals.

"You won't mind that," the landlady replied ;

"you won't want three meals a day. You can have a gas stove and get you an egg about eleven o'clock, and you can go out to your dinner about four. Lots of my roomers manage that way."

Nan at last got away from the woman; even the prospect of getting an egg for herself had no charms for her.

The next house she tried had no single rooms, but this landlady had a double room. There was a young lady in it now, but she couldn't afford to keep it alone, and wanted a room-mate.

"I am quite sure that I shouldn't care for it," said Nan, rising. If there was anything that she didn't want, it was a room-mate, poor child.

"She is a very nice girl. I am sure you two would be congenial," the woman went on. "She is a lovely girl, and she is a saleslady at Macy's."

There was nothing to be done, Nan realized this, and she went home to a lunch of cold mutton, bread and butter, tea, and stewed prunes, feeling very much discouraged. She would stay where she was for a while, and if she couldn't stand it, she would pay more for her board and be in New York a shorter time than she had expected.

All the room-mates were out when she went upstairs, and she threw herself on her bed and congratulated herself.

"The room looks like a hospital, or I suppose it does; I never saw a hospital." She looked

about her more closely than she had had time to do before. Each corner was devoted to the lares and penates of its occupant, and the effect of the whole was highly striking. Miss Stearns had churchly-looking calendars and a little row of devotional books in her corner, with pictures of a saint or two. Miss Jennings was collecting posters, and had her wall completely covered with them. The school-teacher's corner boasted a desk, with a row of pedagogical books and teachers' periodicals on top. A picture of "Pestalozzi Taking Leave of his Orphans at Stanz," and a portrait of Froebel, hung over the desk. Nan had heard of Pestalozzi and Froebel at a teachers' institute which she attended, which was the precise period in her life when she decided that she did not want to teach school.

Nan's corner was bare of decoration. She had left her treasures in the bottom of her trunk, and the trunk was piled on six others in the basement. If she ever could find a little room where she could be alone, she would put her things up,—her Winged Victory, her Venus di Milo, her sketches, and her books. Till then she would get along with her toilet articles, and forget that she had the familiar things in the basement. What would the art school be like, and would people think she had talent. Her thoughts were becoming hazy, and in a few moments she was fast asleep.

When she awoke she was surprised to find how late it was. Miss Tarbell had come in. She had been shopping, and she was very warm. She put on a light wrapper and brewed herself some lemonade.

Nan was refreshed by her nap, and she began dressing for her visit to Miss Frost. At home she would have worn a white dress and a ribbon collar and belt, but instinct told her that the white dress would not be suitable now. She took out her summer dress of light gray, and the pretty straw hat which matched it. Emma Anna had sent "the youngest" out in the world with a few well-made gowns. Nan was glad now that she had them, though she had hated to appropriate any of her little hoard to dress.

She wore her clothes well, having that indescribable, though much-to-be-desired quality known as style, and she looked very sweet and attractive when she went up to speak to her hostess.

"O Annice, I am so glad you are here. You look as fresh as a rose. I want you to meet all of these people. Miss Dunning you saw yesterday. Come here, Mr. Allison, I want to introduce you to my friend Miss Wynkoop. I want it distinctly understood that I discovered Miss Wynkoop."

Mr. Allison, who was a big man with a big voice, said polite things, and Nan felt very small and young. She heard names which she had

seen in art criticisms, and found that their owners looked and acted quite like ordinary people. They did not wear long hair, nor did they wear paint-smeared blouses, as the artists did in story books of a generation ago.

As Nan sat on a couch talking with a mild-looking young woman who was asking her if she were homesick, she heard a girl directly behind her say, "Ask her. It can't do any harm to ask, and there isn't any hair like it in New York, perhaps not on this continent. If you don't I will, but you thought of it first, so you may have the first asking."

Nan could not help wondering who had this wonderful hair, and she was looking around the room, trying to discover it, when a man came up to her, and said abruptly, "Will you let me paint your hair?"

Nan felt her color rising, she was so surprised. "I don't know," she stammered.

"Please think about it and let me know. Remember, I am to have the first chance if you let anyone paint it."

He turned away awkwardly, and the girl who had come up behind him, explained to Nan. "Really, you mustn't mind Mr. Parrish's manner, or the lack of it, whatever you prefer to call it. He always is as abrupt as he was just now, but people don't mind him when they know him. He wants to paint your hair and keep it,—the

painting, not the hair,—for future use. He didn't mean to ask you to let him paint your portrait. I encouraged him to ask you about your hair, but I didn't mean that he should scare you to death. I'll go with you to chaperon you, or get my old-maid sister to go, if you prefer. Or, if you like, Mr. Parrish can paint in my studio. We are great friends, though we fight dreadfully sometimes. He is an impressionist, and I could eat them. Mr. Allison, that big black-aviced man, is another impressionist, though he won't own it. You'll like us very well after you get used to us. Don't forget you are welcome to use my studio when Mr. Parrish paints you."

Nan thanked her and repeated that she would think about it. The girl, whose name Nan had not caught, but whom she afterward knew as Miss Henshawe, sat down beside her, and began to ply her with questions which she interspersed with compliments. Nan was not used to that sort of thing, and she changed the subject by asking Miss Henshawe with whom she studied.

"I am not studying, I am out for myself. I am painting miniatures for dear life. They are all the rage now, and I believe in making hay while the sun shines. And that brings me to the point I wanted to make. Will you let me paint your miniature?" Nan gasped. She looked around the room and began to wonder if all

those people would come and ask her to sit for them.

"I can't promise," she said. "I shall be very busy, and I may have no time to spare."

"Try to find time; you would make such a lovely miniature."

Nan frowned. "I wish she would go," she thought. "I don't want to be rude, but I am getting very tired of this."

"You don't like me to tell you that you are very nice looking? I don't see why you should mind. It is no credit to you. I always tell people if I think they are handsome. I should be very glad if I were good-looking, to be told of it. Do you know, I predict that we shall be great friends. You look surprised. I don't take a fancy to one girl in a hundred, but I liked you at once. Where do you study?"

"I am going to study at Cooper's. I begin Monday."

"Why not at the League? I studied there, and I should like you to study where I did."

"I have so little money that I must stretch it as far as possible, so I am very glad to get into a free class," said Nan frankly.

"What do you do,—what is your line?"

"I have done a little of everything, so far, but I mean to make a business of portraits. That is all that I really care for."

"Do you know, I guessed that you liked por-

trait better than anything else. We are agreed on that. I am so anxious to see some of your work. Where do you live? I shall call on you."

Nan told her, and murmured that she would be glad to see her. She had to admit that Miss Henshawe was very pleasant, and she should be glad of her proffered friendship. Only she wished that she wouldn't gush so.

"When I began at art," Miss Henshawe was saying, in a retrospective tone, "I did black and white work. I fancied that I wanted to be an illustrator, don't you know. But I have dropped that entirely."

"I have worked at pen and ink a good deal, all alone, though; I have had no teaching," said Nan. "I thought perhaps I would study illustrating this year. I understand that one can always get illustrating to do. I really have had considerable encouragement about my pen and ink work, for I sent some things to an editor, and he praised them, and advised me to go on. Perhaps I would be able to take care of myself much sooner if I studied black and white than if I studied portraits. But I love to paint faces."

"Oh, stick to your portraits. It is a pity you have black and white in your head, for if you do much of it you will lose your eye for color. That is what many of the illustrators say, don't they, Mr. Danforth?"

And Miss Henshawe swooped down on a man

who was passing, and drew him into the conversation.

"Of course I agree with you, Miss Henshawe. I always do, but I didn't catch your question."

"Don't you lose your sense of color in making your marvelous black and white work?"

While they were absorbed in this question, Nan took the opportunity to run away. Miss Frost came over to her. "How are you enjoying my lions? Have you had any tea? What a shame! Clara Henshawe has talked you tired, and kept you from getting any tea."

A young lady was pouring tea at a table behind some palms, and presently Mr. Parrish brought Nan a cup, and offered her thin bread-and-butter and tiny cakes. Miss Frost sent him for some tea for herself, and then graciously dismissed him.

"He always makes me nervous," she explained to Nan. "And I don't intend that he shall bore you with his views on art this afternoon. Now I want you to meet that elderly lady, Miss Knowles; she isn't artistic, and that will be a relief to you after Clara Henshawe."

Nan had a pleasant chat with Miss Knowles, who seemed to have no object in life but to be agreeable to homesick young art students. Nan found herself wondering what she "did," and concluded that she did nothing. She was quite surprised a few moments later, to find that she

was a newspaper woman, and that Miss Frost's tea would find its way into the morning paper with which Miss Knowles was connected. As Nan confessed later to Miss Frost, she had always supposed that newspaper women wore unbecoming hats, and had the braid half off their skirts. She did not know that Miss Knowles wore a Redfern gown, but she realized that she was the best dressed woman in the room.

All at once a hush fell on the room. Miss —— was going to sing. Nan did not catch the name, but she guessed that the singer was a lioness. She sang something in Italian, which Nan did not understand at all, but other people seemed to, by the way they applauded. Next she sang a lullaby, then a couple of Scotch ballads. Nan fully appreciated these, and she was sorry when she finished.

Nan remained to dine with Miss Frost, at her urgent invitation. It was very pleasant for the homesick girl. The appetizing little dinner was sent in from a restaurant, and Miss Frost's one maid arranged the table in the cosy little dining-room. Nan ate the first good meal since she had left home.

After dinner they sat in the studio, and Miss Frost showed Nan her pictures and talked art with all her heart. There was something about this young girl which aroused all the enthusiasm of the older woman. Nan felt her hopes rising.

Success was worth working for, even if one had to live with four room-mates.

At nine o'clock she said she must go, and Miss Frost went with her. They strolled along, and before they realized it they were at Madison Square.

"Isn't it beautiful?" said Nan, "the lights, and the shadows on the leaves. The city is prettier by night than by day."

"I love this town," said Miss Frost. "I get tired of my work, and worn out with all the din and roar, and I wish myself far away, in some country place. But I know I should come back. Every one comes back, it is like fate; after one has been here a certain length of time one can't stay away. I try to discourage people, especially women; and I tell them not to come. But they keep coming, till the wonder is that there are any girls left in the smaller towns."

"You didn't discourage me, you advised me to come."

"I know I did. There was a look in your eyes that told me you would starve if you lived the quiet life of your sisters. You may be willing to go back to it after a while, but I felt that you must taste the artist's life. You will find it a very rich life, and you will be happy despite hard work and scanty means. Enjoy your work, but don't overdo. You won't gain anything by disregarding your health. I wish you could find a

better boarding-place, but I know your resources are limited, and I don't see what you can do."

"I have just two hundred and sixty dollars," said Nan. "It must last a year. I had three hundred, but I had to have a few clothes, and I had to pay my fare down here."

"And you bought clothes and paid your fare with forty dollars?"

"Yes; we always make one dollar do the work of two. Emma Anna is a great shopper, and she gets a remnant of this and makes a dress, and a remnant of that to trim it with, and of course she did all my sewing. But I can't have any more clothes. I must make this money last till I reach home next summer. I have figured it all out, and I see I shall have to stay in the C. H. But I hate it, and I know I always shall."

"You won't mind it so much after you are used to it, and you may have real good times with some of the girls. You may be thankful that all the people in your room are permanent; it would be a good deal worse if they were transients, and you had new ones all the time."

"Perhaps I can get in a hall-room and have only one room-mate."

"I shouldn't do it if I were you. You have more cubic space in one-fourth of a large room than you would have in half a hall-room. Then, too, there is the question of heating the room. You'll have to consider that later. In the large

room you will have heat, and you each will pay twenty-five cents a week extra for it."

"That will add to my expense. One dollar a month. I hadn't thought of paying extra for fire. I supposed it went with the room."

"My dear, in New York nothing goes with anything. You simply must keep taking out your purse all the time. But stay in the big room; a hall-room is the abomination of desolation."

"Miss Jamieson, a girl who sits next me at table, says a great many girls take a small room and board themselves."

"Let me say don't, again. It is the loneliest, most morbid kind of a life. You would half starve yourself without meaning to, and it is enough to make one crazy to live alone. It really is healthier to be packed with three other people as you are now. There are no end of queer women in New York who became so by living alone and getting their meals on an oil or a gas stove. I don't dare be alone, and Miss Powers and I stay together from a missionary spirit. I shall be glad when she comes back, for I fear I shall soon begin talking to myself if I am alone much longer, or adopt a dog, which would be worse."

They were at Union Square by this time, and they stopped again to watch the flickering shadows on the pavement.

As they walked on, Miss Frost said, "I am glad you are here, Annice, and I hope I have not

frightened you by painting things as they are. It takes a good stout heart to succeed, but the work we have chosen, perhaps I should say the work that has chosen us, is worth doing for the sake of the doing, and often times the results are very satisfactory. Art is not like the professions, which are said to be overcrowded ; there is a place for each one who has a message to give. And no one can do another's work.

" But here we are, and there is a light in your room. I hope it isn't full of bugs and mosquitoes and things. They really ought to give you window-screens."

With which sudden transition from art to practical life, Miss Frost shook hands and said good-night.

CHAPTER VI.

IT was over, that first day at the art school, and Nan was lying on her little bed, wondering if she were glad or sorry that she had set out to be an artist. Art seemed very long, then, poor child, and home very far away.

She had gone to church twice on Sunday, as was her custom. In the morning Miss Jamieson took her to a grand church, which Nan fancied looked like a cathedral, with vested choir and stained glass, and a great deal of ritual. It had pleased Nan from an artistic standpoint, but she missed the plain little church and the familiar hymns,—Harriet at the organ, and Mr. Bamford's bass in the choir. She wanted to be there and sit next one of the dear ones,—Charlotte or Emma Anna, or, best of all, her mother. She had missed the plain face in the shabby bonnet, and she was thankful that she was able to call it up to her memory. She left the grand church, feeling like one invited to a banquet, where one saw cut-glass and fine linen, but did not partake of the food. But she afterward learned to love the grand churches, and she soon felt at home in them.

In the afternoon she went alone to a quiet little church and joined in the familiar hymns with a shaking voice. She felt more at home than at any time since she had left the little brown house. She would be good, she said to herself, she would do right and work hard and endure hardships. She fell asleep that night under the influence of that mood and slept like a child. In the morning she felt hopeful and uplifted, despite the fact that she had three room-mates.

But now, as she lay on her bed, she was in the depths. If she had not been too ashamed she would have gone back home. She told herself that she was foolish to think of being an artist, she with no money, and perhaps with no talent. How the big man in the glasses had looked at her best work ! "It might as well have been a patch-work quilt as a picture," she said indignantly. She laughed at the idea, and then she felt better.

Just then a bell in the hall rang three times. Nan had already learned that when a maid rang a bell three times there was a caller for some one on the third floor. This was one of the labor-saving inventions of the house. The bell kept ringing, and as no one else seemed to be on that floor, Nan went to the stair and asked who was wanted.

"There's a lady to see Miss Wynkoop. I've nearly rung my hands off. I've got something

to do besides pulling bells, and it most dinner time."

"Tell the lady that I'll be down at once," replied Nan. Everyone in the house seemed to be afraid of Martha, and Nan dared not say anything if she sent her caller away.

She supposed it was Miss Frost, but she found Miss Henshawe instead. She was examining the placard which called the attention of the visitors to the fact that the boarders were getting fed and sheltered cheaply, and that they were to behave themselves. Miss Henshawe seemed much interested, evidently, for she had her lorgnette up to her eyes as Nan came forward.

"Oh, I am so glad you are in. I had half a mind to run away. I was frightened at that maid in the hall. How do you stand her? This must be a C. H. I have heard so much about them. But tell me about yourself. How did you get along to-day? I thought I would call at once. These first days are so hard, and I feared you might need cheering up. You haven't been crying, I hope. Your eyes look like it. There, I won't say any more. Minerva is always telling me that I have no tact. I told her about you, and she suggested that you might not want to see a caller so soon, that you might be tired. But I told her that this is just the time when you would need cheering."

"I am glad you came," said Nan, feeling that

that much was expected of her. "I didn't have a very good day. I very much doubt that I shall ever learn to paint."

"I know you will. It is perfectly natural to be discouraged at first. I am simply dying to see some of your work. Why can't I go up to your room and look at your pictures? I want to see your room, too. Do you have a row of little beds like a hospital?"

Nan could not very well refuse, so she took her upstairs. The other occupants of the room had not yet come in, so Miss Henshawe examined everything. The calendars and pictures of saints caught her eye.

"Who has this corner? She must be very high-church. And the posters. What a mixture. This corner must belong to a school ma'am; look at the teachers' magazines. Your corner is bare. Do get your pictures, that's a good child."

Nan took them out of a drawer, explaining that most of them were in her trunk in the basement. Miss Henshawe literally fell upon the sketches. "Why, child, you are a genius. These are simply exquisite. I thought there must be something about you more than your good looks to make Jessica Frost take you up. She freezes out most girls who go to her. Where did you learn to paint like this?"

Nan felt very much embarrassed. She did not

like to think that Miss Henshawe was "making fun of her," but she knew that her pictures were not wonderful. When she came to know Miss Henshawe better, she learned to make allowance for her enthusiasm.

"There is no doubt about your success," she said, as she put aside the last sketch. "You simply can't help succeeding with your gifts. I didn't dream that you could do half so well. You and I shall be great friends, I feel sure of that, don't you?"

Nan politely said that she hoped so. Miss Henshawe laughed. "You and I are very different, perhaps that is the reason I like you so well. I enthuse about everything. Minerva calls it making a fuss. She says I use up all my enthusiasm on ordinary occasions, and have nothing left if anything really happens. I want you to meet Minerva. She really is quite a character. We live together in a kind of a picnic fashion in a studio. I simply adore it, but she is in misery. She thinks no one can live respectably unless one has a whole house. We have that up in Fryeburg, Maine, but as we have nothing else in the world I have to work for my living. We used to have money, and then Minerva was young and she was quite a belle. Then our father lost his money, and he and mother died, and we had only the old house and the garden full of old-fashioned flowers. I studied art a few winters in Boston, then I

moved to New York, and dragged poor Minerva with me. She hated to come, but she got it into her head that it wasn't safe nor respectable for me to be here alone."

"I should think you would be very happy together. I should dearly love to have one of my sisters with me, though Harriet is the only one who would enjoy it. The rest are so set in their way they couldn't make any change."

"That is just the word. Minerva is set in her way. She wants to go on forever, doing the same thing in the same way, in the same place. I don't, I like change, and I like life. I'd rather live here as we do in those rooms and go without things, and see something of life, than to be the richest person in some small town. But Minerva misses the flower-garden and the familiar things so, that I sometimes threaten to make her go back. I can see her as she used to walk at dusk in the flower garden. There were those yellow evening primroses along the path, and as her gown brushed against them, their fragrance would come in the windows. She says she can always smell those primroses when she thinks of home. I suppose I am selfish to let her stay with me. Do you like to board?" Miss Henshawe broke off abruptly.

"I don't know. I don't like it here, but I shall have to be satisfied. I am glad to be in New York, even if I am not altogether comfortable."

"I wish we had room enough to take you with us. Perhaps we can take a larger apartment next year. I know I could do my best work if you were with me. You would spur me on to make the best of myself."

Nan adroitly drew Miss Henshawe back to her studio by asking how long she had been keeping house.

"Two years. At first we boarded, but I couldn't work. I felt cramped, imprisoned, and I took this studio. There is only the one big room and two small ones. We do everything in the studio, but sleep. Minerva is ashamed of the way we live when some one comes down from Fryeburg. She has more pride than I have. As I said, I took these rooms and moved in. We brought some things down from home, and I picked up a few more. I began to breathe, and I felt that I could work. I enjoy it as much as ever. I am Alexander Selkirk on a small scale. I am 'monarch of all I survey, and my right there is none to dispute!'

"Poor Minerva was all at sea at first, while I was so happy. She had been used to a range as big as a house, and she couldn't cook on a gas stove. I actually had to show her how to do things, and she is considered the best cook in Fryeburg. She is doing nicely now, though she mourns for a cellar, and thinks it disgraceful not to have a barrel of flour. She takes very good

care of me, and I hope I shew her that I appreciate her. I know she will like you. She doesn't like all of my friends. There is Basil Parrish, for instance, she can't endure him, but she tries to be very nice to him because she doesn't want to. Minerva does the thing she doesn't want to do; that is characteristic of her."

"Mr. Parrish? Is he the man who looks so tired of everything, and who asked if he might paint my hair?"

"Yes; you don't like him? He really is a very good fellow. I have known him ever since I began to study in Boston. Minerva used to worry because she feared that we liked each other. Fancy being sentimental over Basil Parrish! Can you imagine such a thing?"

Nan readily confessed that she could not, and her answer amused Miss Henshawe very much.

"Minerva, like most old-school people, can't understand the free-and-easy way we professional people have. She thinks if we call each other by our first names and fight over our pictures we must be especially interested. Don't you think that people used to be much more sentimental than they are now?"

Nan said she didn't know, she had never thought about it.

"You notice, and you will find that I am right. There is something in the air, I don't know just what it is, but men and women discuss books and

art, but they don't talk love, unless it is in an impersonal way. Not that I want any man to make love to me. I am wedded to my work. Aren't you wedded to yours? I am sure you are. Is that the dinner-bell? I didn't realize that I was staying so long. Did you want to dress, and have I bothered you? Oh, can't I stay to dinner? Won't you invite me? I should love to stay and see all these women. It must be great fun."

Of course Nan asked her to stay, and they went down into the basement. Miss Jamieson saw that Nan had company, and she good-naturedly gave up her place at table.

Miss Henshawe seemed to enjoy herself quite as much as she expected. She found out the occupations of most of the girls near her before she had finished her soup. Nan was in mortal terror lest her questions would be overheard.

"Who is the oldish woman opposite, the one who looks like an old-time blue-stockings?" Miss Henshawe demanded.

Nan explained that she was a theosophist, and added that she was very nice to her, in the hope that Miss Henshawe would stop staring at her.

"Oh, yes, theosophy. I've been all through that in Boston. I really had quite an idea of it at one time while I was studying art. I really feel now at times that I must have lived before. I feel that I have done the same things, and said

the same things, don't you know, and yet I know that it is impossible, unless I did it in some previous existence."

The medical student who sat on Nan's left explained that this was caused by the two hemispheres of the brain not acting exactly together.

Miss Henshawe thanked her amiably, and turned her attention to Miss Madison, who asked her if she had ever attended the meetings of the theosophical society in New York. Miss Henshawe said she hadn't. The truth was, theosophy was too deep for her, it made her head ache.

Nan thought it time to turn the conversation into other channels. She saw that the Christian scientist was about to tell Miss Henshawe that she couldn't have the headache, and that the medical student in her last year was opening her mouth to prescribe for the headache, which it was her business to cure.

So Nan asked Miss Henshawe how long it took to paint a miniature. In a moment she was discoursing on miniature painting, and the Christian scientist and the medical students went on with their dinner.

Miss Henshawe lingered after dinner. She and Nan sat in the parlor, for Nan knew that her room-mates were in. The girls who were studying art came in, and Nan introduced one or two whom she had met. They were pleased to meet Miss

Henshawe, and they seemed to consider her presence quite a compliment to the house. She answered a number of questions about miniature painting, and good-naturedly offered to give one of the girls a lesson, if she would drop in some day when she had leisure.

Presently Martha ushered a gentleman into the parlor. "Why Mr. Parrish," exclaimed Miss Henshawe. "How did you come?"

"Miss Minerva sent me after you. She was really worried when I dropped in after dinner. She said you had gone to call on Miss Wynkoop and she couldn't understand why you had not returned. She said it was like you to stay to dinner, but she wasn't sure that something hadn't happened to you."

"Nonsense. I believe you were glad of an excuse to come," said Miss Henshawe. "You thought it would give you an opportunity to call on Miss Wynkoop. I don't see why I shouldn't stay to dinner when she asked me. I've had a beautiful time. Miss Wynkoop and I are the best of friends, only she paints so well that I am frightfully jealous of her. You ought to see her pictures, Basil."

"I'm simply dying to see them. You won't be so hard-hearted as to refuse, I hope, Miss Wynkoop."

Nan politely but firmly refused, and Mr. Parrish rumpled his hair and declared himself in the depths

of despair. Nan didn't like him, and she took no particular pains to hide her feelings.

Miss Minerva's anxiety did not affect either Miss Henshawe or Mr. Parrish, for they stayed till ten o'clock. A good share of the time was spent in quarreling over the relative merits of their studios. Nan couldn't understand a man who made so much of his china and cabinets and rugs, but she concluded that Mr. Parrish must be like the artists she had read of in books. She thanked him formally when he told her he was to have a studio tea shortly, and that he should be most happy if she would come.

"The little Wynkoop girl doesn't like Mr. Parrish," he said, as he and Miss Henshawe went down the steps.

"No wonder," said Miss Henshawe, taking his arm. "She is not blind nor stupid, and your story about Minerva's fright was altogether too slimy not to be seen through."

"You are glad she doesn't like me. Perhaps you have been setting her against me."

"How ridiculous you are. I hope I have something to talk of besides you. You frightened her at Miss Frost's tea, and you are not her style, that is all. She doesn't try very hard to hide her dislikes, and I like her for her frankness. We want that car. It is time we were going home to relieve poor Minerva's anxiety."

CHAPTER VII.

NAN'S first week at the art school seemed very long. When, at last, Friday afternoon came, she felt that she had been away from home a month, instead of a week. She sat in the big rocking-chair, trying to write a cheerful letter home, when some one rapped at the door. Miss Frost entered in response to Nan's "Come in."

She stooped and kissed Nan, then turned her face to the light to see how she looked.

"I hope you haven't lost any of the roses out of your cheeks. No, not yet. I came right up, I thought you wouldn't mind. Did you think I had deserted you because I haven't been near you all week? I was called out of town for two days, and since then I have been trying to catch up. How have you been this week, and what do you think of Cooper?"

"I'm discouraged. Miss Frost, I don't believe I ever will know how to paint.

Miss Frost made an impatient gesture. "I ought to know whether you can or not. When you say you can't you reflect upon my judgment, and that isn't nice of you, Nan."

Nan laughed. She felt more hopeful already. Miss Frost always inspired her.

"Get on your hat, I am going to take you home with me and keep you all evening. I had to come down town to shop, and I intended to call for you, so I didn't think it necessary to write you."

"I'm glad to go, but I must change my dress," and Nan put her writing materials away.

"What are you going to do with your evenings this winter? Don't, I beg, read books on art. Don't do any work. Go out to everything that you hear of. There will be a lot of women with hobbies in this house,—get acquainted with them, and go out to their meetings, whether they are Christian scientists or spiritualists. They will be sure to ask you to go with them, they are always after the latest comer."

"There are all kinds of people here," said Nan, letting down a shower of yellow hair. "There are theosophists, and vegetarians, and Christian scientists, and woman suffragists, and ethical culturists, and a lot more who are following some . . . ism. I looked at them last night at dinner, and thought,

"'Parthians and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia.'

"There are a lot more of them, and I fear I can't pronounce all the hard words, but you

know what I mean. These women are like them, for they all speak in their own tongues; that is, they talk of their particular hobby."

Miss Frost laughed. "I can imagine them, I think. I have met most of the types. New York is a regular stamping ground for people with isms. They will amuse you for a while, and it will be a diversion to go out with them. I'll risk their converting you. Some of these women are very nice, if they are queer. Are you ready?"

"You will meet my brother to-night, I hope," said Miss Frost, as she put her latchkey in her door. "He is such an erratic individual that I am never sure of him. Yes, he is here; I smell his cigar. My dear Theodore, why didn't you have the gas lighted? The room is as dark as Egypt. How long have you been here?"

"An hour or more. I knew you wouldn't let me smoke if you were here, on account of your curtains; and as for the dark, I am not afraid of it."

He lighted a match as he spoke, and turned on the gas.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed involuntarily, as his eyes fell on Nan. He did not know that anyone was with his sister, and Nan happened to stand before a dark-red curtain which hung between the studio and an adjoining room. She certainly made a striking picture, and Mr. Frost was surprised.

"I beg your pardon," he said, as he acknowl-

edged his sister's introduction. "I didn't expect to see any one, and you surprised me."

Miss Frost hid a smile. "Teddy" was such a man of the world that she was amused to see how he was impressed by her little protégé.

"You have done some very good things since I was here last, Jess. I have been poking around among your canvases. You'll really be famous if you keep on. The critics did you proud about your last exhibit."

"I would rather hear you call my pictures good than to hear what the critics say, Teddy," and the dignified Miss Frost patted her brother's broad back.

Nan began to feel homesick. This being with people who had "folks" was really worse than seeing lorn women. But she managed to swallow the lump in her throat, and a few moments later when they were seated at dinner she found herself enjoying the conversation.

Mr. Frost had lately returned from a sojourn abroad, and he talked of everything which had come in his way. To Nan, with her narrow horizon, it all seemed like a bit from the Arabian Nights. Now Mr. Frost was in a gondola at Venice, the next moment he was in a café at Paris, or fishing for salmon in Norway. He told stories of his student life in the Latin Quarter, of building bridges in Arizona, and of shooting big game in Manitoba.

"What is he?" thought Nan. "Sometimes he talks like an engineer, and sometimes like an artist." The question must have been in her eyes, for Miss Frost turned to her during a momentary lull in her brother's talk, and said,

"Annice, my brother is a civil engineer by profession, and an artist by birth. He paints better than I do, but spends nine months of each year building bridges and railroads, and the remaining three months in Paris or Venice, painting pictures. He has just come back from his annual dissipation, and he goes very soon to New Mexico to forget for another nine months that he ever held a brush."

"We are a very artistic family, Miss Wynkoop," said Mr. Frost. "That is what people always say at this juncture."

Nan did not know what to say. This man was not like any man she had ever seen. She half believed that he was making fun of her, that he thought she was only a child. At any rate he had been startled out of his self-possession when he first saw her. "What a goose you are, Nan Wynkoop," she thought, giving herself a mental shake. "What difference does it make what he thinks of you?"

Mr. Frost was far away again, dining with an Arab sheik, acting as war correspondent during the Chinese-Japanese war, or sketching Indians out on the plains. Nan saw that she need not

say anything, and both she and Miss Frost were well content to listen.

They lingered long over their coffee, which they had in the studio. At last Mr. Frost looked at his watch. "We ought to take Miss Wynkoop to hear something, Jessica. What is on, anything worth while?"

"I don't think so, Teddy, and I am quite sure that Miss Wynkoop would rather stay quietly here than go out. She is tired, for this has been her first week in New York. She is one of us, Theodore."

He nodded. "I guessed as much. You are not apt to have friends who are not of the same mind. What do you think of New York, Miss Wynkoop? I believe that is the proper thing to ask."

"It is too soon to know, is it not? Sometimes it seems very pretty, some parts, I mean. Of course I haven't been about much."

"You'll have to love it if you wish to keep in my sister's good graces. She thinks there is no town in the world like New York."

"If there is I haven't seen it."

"Haven't you seen Paris? I am homesick for it already. When we are rich, dear child, we'll go there and stay."

"No, we won't, dear boy. I would rather have ten years of New York than twenty years of Paris."

"Miss Wynkoop wouldn't. She is going to Paris to study art."

Nan flushed. He *was* making fun of her. "How do you know?" she asked sturdily.

"I see it in your eyes. I'll wager anything you like that you are studying a French conversation book, and learning how to say, 'Will you kindly direct me to the Louvre?' Honest now, own up."

"Don't tease her, Teddy. You must not mind him, Annice."

"Of course she will go to Paris, but she will come back like the good American she is, and have a studio on Fifty-seventh Street. I discovered Miss Wynkoop myself, Theodore, and I expect to be very well satisfied with my find."

"Where is she studying?"

"At Cooper. That is very well for the present, at least."

"What is she going to paint best?"

"Portraits."

"Is she working for fun or in dead earnest?"

"She is very much in earnest."

Nan noticed that they discussed her as if she were not present.

Mr. Frost turned to her. "So you are one of us, and I wish you good speed. Do you know what art means, oftentimes? Are you willing to live in an attic and go hungry, and wear old clothes for art's sake? Do you understand what

Browning meant when he wrote those words about sitting down to write or paint in poverty, with pity for the rich?"

Did she understand them? They were the very words she had used to Harriet the day when she decided to go to New York. Again she had a suspicion that Mr. Frost was making fun of her. She didn't want him to. Miss Frost she thoroughly understood and trusted, but she had her doubts about the engineer-artist. She consoled herself by thinking that he was conceited, but she admitted to herself the next moment that she didn't see how he could help it.

They did not go anywhere, but sat and talked the evening through. Miss Frost allowed her brother to smoke, with total disregard for her curtains, after Nan insisted that cigar smoke was not at all disagreeable to her.

It was ten o'clock when she suddenly realized that it was time to go home. Mr. Frost escorted her, and nearly drove her to distraction by his questions about the Christian Home. At last she gave him a graphic description of the place as she saw it, and was rewarded by his saying that she ought to have been a newspaper woman.

"Come up to dinner again when I get back from the West," he said, as he bade her good-night. "Perhaps by that time you will be able to give me more points about boarding-houses."

CHAPTER VIII.

It had been a wet, foggy, sticky day, and Nan dragged herself home from the art school and sat down in her corner of the room, a little, wet, bedraggled heap of misery. She had received an unfavorable criticism on her day's work, her head ached and throbbed, and the weather had been most dismal for several days.

"This is New York," said Nan, kicking her trunk with the toe of her wet boot. "I wish I had never come, so there! I'll never, never, learn to paint, and after coming down here with flying colors, I shall have to go back and teach school. I would have a good crying spell if fourteen women weren't likely to come in at any moment. It's hard lines when one hasn't a chance to cry in peace."

The bell rang three times, and Nan went into the hall to see who was wanted.

"A gentleman to see Miss Wynkoop," the maid called.

Nan wondered who it could be, and she forgot to ask Martha the name. She bathed her face, smoothed her hair, and ran down in her neat

Scotch plaid shirt waist and black skirt. She was too disconsolate to care how she looked.

Mr. Bamford sat near the door, and he came forward eagerly as Nan entered.

"Why, what a surprise, I had no idea of seeing you," said Nan, saying the first words which came to her lips.

She knew she was blushing, and she was very angry at herself for it, which made her blush all the more. The truth is, that not five minutes before Mr. Bamford came she had thought, "I know I might marry Mr. Bamford if I wanted to. Perhaps I am foolish not to think of him seriously."

Mr. Bamford was still holding her hand, and looking into her eyes in a way which was unmistakable. "You are not looking well, Annice."

"Thank you," said Nan, making an effort to be flippant. "Do you call that complimentary?"

But Mr. Bamford paid no heed to her remark. "You are too pale, and you are thinner than when you left home. I fear you are working too hard, and if this is a specimen of New York weather I haven't any desire to be a resident."

"It isn't always so bad. Nor am I such a ghost as you would make me believe."

Mr. Bamford shook his head gravely.

"Let us not talk any more about me, please. How are—they—all?"

The last two words were spoken rather brokenly,

as Nan realized. She had never been more homesick than she was just then. As she spoke she could see the old brown house, and its inmates gathered around the supper-table.

Mr. Bamford was tactful enough not to notice the break in her voice. "Everybody is well, and they are as happy and as contented as can be expected while their Nan is away. All the family sent their love to you."

"Thank you very much. Now tell me how you happened to come to New York."

Nan had her voice under control now. She sat erect and at ease, and essayed to direct the conversation into safe channels.

"I didn't happen, I just came on purpose, as the children say," returned Mr. Bamford, with a glimmer of amusement in his eyes. "Why shouldn't I come? I wanted to see you, and here I am."

"Oh," said Nan comprehensively. She wondered if she should ask him to dinner. She would if she had boarded anywhere else. But how could she take a man down to dinner among all those women. No; she decided that she couldn't face such an ordeal.

"Get your hat and coat, Annice, and come to dinner with me," Mr. Bamford said, as if he had read her thoughts.

Nan wanted to invent some excuse. She was vexed that he had come, and still more vexed that he did not pretend that he came on business.

"I suppose I must be nice to him," she thought, as she mounted the long stairs.

She changed her gown, putting on the dark green one that Emma Anna had sent her at Christmas time. Should she put on the pale blue silk front? The gown was so somber without it. "No; I shan't make myself look one bit better than I can help," she said, with a conscious look in the mirror. "He is silly enough about me, without encouraging him."

"Going out to dinner?" said Miss Jennings, who had just come in. "You are to be congratulated. I wish I were going. I suppose that is your young man in the parlor. He is very nice looking, but I should be afraid he would be very masterful. I hope he won't be frightened by such a pack of women as come in at this time of day."

"He isn't my young man," Nan replied severely. "He is a friend of my family, and he naturally called when he came to the city."

"Naturally," repeated Miss Jennings, in an aggravating manner.

Nan opened a box and took out a spick-and-span pair of gloves. "I want him to think that I am rolling in wealth," she thought. "Perhaps I would better put on the blue silk front. I dare say I can manage him if he becomes too enthusiastic."

"I hope you are hungry," said Mr. Bamford,

as he seated himself opposite Nan at a table at the St. Denis. "I am, I assure you. What do you like?"

"Anything and everything, but I have no imagination."

Nan had removed her jacket, and the blue silk front was very becoming. The damp air made her hair even more curly than usual. It hung in little rings around her delicate ears, and on her forehead. Mr. Bamford, evidently, was well pleased with his ex-pupil, and Nan herself was not displeased. It was much better to be dressed in her new gown, and to be dining with a nice-looking young man than to be eating boiled mutton and rice pudding with a roomful of tired women. She might as well be as charming as she knew how to be, and repay Mr. Bamford for his kindness to her. So she chatted in most friendly fashion, and gave him an account of all she did and saw from day to-day. But she was careful not to tell him of her discouragements. She kept up the appearance of being very happy, very well satisfied with herself and with art. She managed to speak that small word in a manner which suggested a very large A.

Mr. Bamford listened to Nan, but he said little. She found herself wishing that he would say more. So long as he was in the restaurant he could not talk about woman's sphere, and such objectionable topics.

Miss Jennings had called him nice-looking; he was. Nan wondered that she had never before seen how handsome he was. "He really has very fine eyes, and his smile is quite attractive. I wonder what such a mouth indicates." So absorbed was Nan in her study of him, that she failed to see the mischief in his eyes.

"Do you like me any better than you did last summer, now that you have studied me?"

The smile had spread over his whole face now.

Nan started, she was so surprised, "I beg pardon," she stammered. "I was wondering,—that is, I was studying you, and I forgot that you were not a model."

"I don't mind in the least, I assure you. How strange it seems to be here with you. We are the same people who used to be in Macedonia, are we not? You seem more grown up, and, to tell the truth, I am a little afraid of you, Annice."

Annice. Nan noticed that Mr. Bamford had taken to using her Christian name. She did not like it, for it suggested that he felt that he had come nearer to her. She did not know what to do about it, however, so she did nothing.

"I have missed you wofully, Annice. I dared not let you know that I was coming, for I feared you would order me to stay at home."

"It was very foolish of you to come unless you had business. I shall be at home next sum-

mer, and my friends will be able to see me then, instead of wasting their substance in trips to New York."

"That may suffice for your friends. I am not one."

Nan set her teeth, and waited a second before she replied: "If you are not my friend you must be my foe, and I should be sorry to think that of my old teacher."

There was no one within hearing distance, and Mr. Bamford said, "I am a lonely man, waiting for the woman I love to find out that home is the best place in the world for a woman."

Nan flushed angrily. They had finished dinner, and she began to struggle into her jacket.

Mr. Bamford took it from her. "Let's start right, so you won't crush your sleeves. I know sleeves are not what they were once, but that is a very pretty gown, and should be handled with care."

As they reached the street Mr. Bamford looked at his watch. "It is not eight yet. Let's go and see something good. Or are you tired of the theater?"

"No," said Nan, smiling as she thought of the few times she had gone to see a play, in company with other girls, and how they had climbed to the family-circle.

"Or perhaps you would prefer to go to the symphony concert. Just as you like, Annice."



"Let's start right, so you won't crush your sleeves," said Mr. Bamford as
took her jacket from her.—Page 82.

Annice Wynkoop.

"I think I prefer the concert."

Music always quieted Nan, and she felt that she needed a quietus. It was better to go out with Mr. Bamford than to sit in the parlor and hear him say that he was waiting to have her make a fizzle of art.

They did not sit in the family-circle, and the music did rest Nan. She was in quite a peaceable frame of mind when they started home. "If he would only leave town soon," she said to her self.

"What are you going to do to-morrow? You don't work on Saturday, do you? Won't you take me up to the Metropolitan museum, and show me how to admire pictures? That will take the morning. Then we'll have luncheon and go to Staten Island to see those cousins of mine you met last summer. They always expect me to go to see them when I come to the city. How does this program suit you? I must leave on the six o'clock train; I shall stop over Sunday with my brother, and reach home bright and early Monday morning. I wish you were going to be there in my classes, Annice."

"I don't. I would much rather be here. I'll take you to the Metropolitan to-morrow. I go once every week, and I haven't been there at all this week. It will be great sport to make you admire the pictures you should admire."

"I suppose I am a regular Philistine. That

is the proper word to use, is it not? How early may I call for you to-morrow morning?

"As soon as you like. We would better go early, for it takes a long time to see even a few pictures."

As Nan spoke they went up to the steps of the boarding-house. The inmates did not carry latch-keys, but if they expected to be out late they usually explained to the matron, and were given a latch-key. Nan had not provided herself with a key, for she had not expected to be late. Mr. Bamford rang the bell again and again, but no one responded.

"What a shame to keep you waiting here so long. It is very chilly, I fear you will take cold." And Mr. Bamford gave the bell a furious pull.

The light from the other side of the street fell upon Nan's face. "You are thin, Annice. It pains me to see that tired look in your eyes."

Nan turned away. "Don't," she said, "I am well and happy. I don't need any pity. There comes some one to open the door. I am so glad. Good-night, Mr. Bamford, I have had a very pleasant evening."

CHAPTER IX.

AS Nan feared, the tour of the museum was not a complete success. Mr. Bamford evinced a decided disregard for art ; he preferred to sit down and talk with one of its followers. In vain Nan took him from room to room, and she was fully aware that he looked at her instead of the pictures.

“ Ah, Miss Wynkoop, good-morning. I thought I should find you here.”

“ Good-morning, Mr. Parrish. Mr. Bamford, let me make you acquainted with Mr. Parrish. Mr. Bamford is an old teacher of mine, Mr. Parrish, and—”

“ Ah, you are to be congratulated on starting Miss Wynkoop on the path of art, which she is destined to tread with such—”

Nan laughed. “ You need not take the trouble to fill out the sentence, Mr. Parrish. Mr. Bamford has nothing to do with my art studies. He doesn't care for art at all ; he is a regular Philistine, as he called himself just now. He is devoted to mathematics and such disagreeable things. I have taken real delight in making you look at pictures, Mr.

Bamford, and I fancy I have paid you back for some of the unhappy hours you gave me over my mathematics."

"You were a very fair mathematician, Annice," said Mr. Bamford, stiffly.

He teach her art! He grew rigid at the very idea. He did not approve of this young man, and he took particular pains to call Nan by her Christian name. He did not thank her for calling him her old teacher. He was glad he was older than that airy young fellow who seemed on such very good terms with Nan. What was that they were saying about a miniature?

"How is the miniature coming on? It is done, Miss Henshawe wrote me. I haven't seen it lately."

"Miss Henshawe is very conceited about that piece of work. I told her it was no credit to her. She could thank you for giving her such an inspiring subject."

"What is this, Annice? Have you had your miniature painted?" asked Mr. Bamford.

Nan noticed, with much amusement, that he had resumed his "teachery" manner.

"One of my friends wanted to paint me, and I consented, because I couldn't get out of her clutches."

"I should like to see it."

"Why don't we all go and see it?" Mr. Parrish suggested. "If Miss Henshawe isn't in her sister

will be, and she will let us poke around the studio as much as we like."

To Nan's surprise, Mr. Bamford said he would like to go, and the three walked down to Miss Henshawe's studio in Fifty-seventh Street.

"Come in," said a voice, in response to Mr. Parrish's rap, and the owner of the voice came to meet them. She seemed quite abashed when she saw the stranger, and apologized for her dusting-cap, which she had forgotten to remove.

"Never mind the dusting-cap, Miss Minerva. We know it is early to make calls. Is Miss Henshawe in?"

Miss Minerva Henshawe, by the way, was fully fifteen years older than her sister, but she never claimed her prerogatives in name or otherwise.

"Yes, Clara is in. She is behind the screen, making chocolate for luncheon. You are just in time to take pot-luck with us."

"We were hoping we would be," said Mr. Parrish shamelessly. "The chocolate smells awfully good."

Miss Henshawe came from behind the screen, and greeted her guests with her usual enthusiasm.

"You shall see the miniature after we have had our chocolate," she said. "There isn't much else. If I had cheese I would make a Welsh rabbit. Mr. Parrish, you shall make the salad dressing, and, Nan dear, you may cut the bread. You al-

ways cut it so thin, like the good little housewife that you are."

Mr. Bamford was much edified to see Nan cutting bread. Miss Minerva tied a white apron around her, and allowed her to assist in setting the table. From the point of vantage where Mr. Bamford sat, he could see behind the screen, where the operations went on.

"Come, Mr. Bamford," said Miss Henshawe, hospitably. "Is the salad ready, Mr. Parrish? Then let's sit by, as they say up in the country. This is Bohemia, Mr. Bamford; I hope you won't be shocked."

But that gentleman seemed to be enjoying his luncheon very much, to Nan's great surprise. He put aside his teachery manner when he talked with his hostess, but he assumed it instantly if called upon to reply directly to any of Mr. Parrish's remarks.

That gentleman partook largely of the salad which he had dressed, discoursing meantime upon art matters. As he never made a statement which Miss Henshawe did not contradict, naturally the conversation was lively.

"Is there anything else? If there is I will change the plates," he said obligingly.

"There are some preserves left, are there not, Minerva?" asked Miss Henshawe.

"Yes; I'll get them. I allow no one in my preserve jar."

She came back presently with a plate of pound cake, and some rich quince preserves.

"What a dessert!" exclaimed Mr. Parrish, appreciatively, as he deftly changed the plates. "I shall be good-natured for a whole week, Miss Minerva. Every summer, Miss Wynkoop, Miss Minerva goes up into the country, no one knows just where, and holds a kind of Elusinian mystery in somebody's orchard. In the fall she comes back with preserves like these. Do you make enough pound cake in the summer to last all year, Miss Minerva?"

"No; this cake was made in my cousin's kitchen in Harlem this week. I can't bake cake here," said Miss Minerva, with regret in her voice.

"Minerva is heartbroken because her dinners come in from restaurants, and because her breakfasts and luncheons are cooked in a chafing-dish or on a gas stove. I believe she sighs for a big range so she can cook 'biled dish' and bake Indian pudding."

"We never had 'biled dish' at home, Clara. I would like a sizable range, though. I can't seem to get used to cooking on a gas stove."

"Now for the miniature," cried Mr. Parrish, when the pound cake had been eaten. "When we have seen it and admired it, we will wash the dishes."

Miss Henshawe led the way back to the studio

part of the big room. "If you don't call it good I shall never be able to hold up my head again."

Mr. Parrish seized the miniature, held it above his head, and dropped on his knees in a dramatic fashion.

Nan looked at Mr. Bamford. He was actually glowering at the artist.

"It's simply immense, Miss Henshawe. It is worthy of its subject; I can say no more."

Miss Henshawe took the miniature from Mr. Parrish and gave it to Mr. Bamford. He looked at it, as Miss Henshawe afterward said to her sister, as if he were saying his prayers to it.

He made no comment, however, except to say that it was very like the original, and handed it to Nan.

"Such a fuss about a miniature," said that young woman, energetically. "I don't think much of it, Clara Henshawe, and I don't intend to help spoil you. Now let's all go and wash the dishes. Oh, Mr. Bamford, pardon me; I forgot that we are going to Staten Island. But I am coming up soon, Miss Minerva, to have a good old-fashioned visit with you, when Clara is out."

Nan kissed Miss Minerva, and shook hands with Miss Henshawe and Mr. Parrish. Meantime, Mr. Bamford was taking a last look at the miniature.

The visit to Staten Island was anything but

pleasant to Nan. Mr. Bamford's relatives seemed to have an impression that there was a great deal between him and Nan, and they took sundry ways of making it known to her. Nan was more than annoyed; she was angry. She had met Mr. Bamford's young lady cousins the summer before, and she had "asked them to tea,"—so it was perfectly natural that she should call on them. They asked her very pointedly if she expected to study art next year. Nan knew that she couldn't unless something entirely unforeseen occurred, but she promptly answered, "Oh, certainly. It will take years of hard study to prepare me for my life work." That will impress them, she added to herself.

It seemed to, for nothing more was said about her plans for the future. Nan and Mr. Bamford were most cordially asked "to stay to tea," but he had his train to make, so they left early.

Nan went with Mr. Bamford to the station at his earnest request. "What shall I tell your people?" he asked as he bade her good-by.

"Tell them that I am busy and happy," said Nan bravely. "And, Mr. Bamford, please don't tell them that I am not looking well. I don't want them to worry about me."

"All aboard," shouted the official in stentorian tones.

Mr. Bamford took both Nan's hands. "I'll say nothing that you don't want me to say, little Nan,

for my desire, my only desire, is to stand well in your sight."

"I don't care for him, and I don't believe I ever can," Nan thought as she waited for a downtown car. "Still, if he keeps on in this way he may make me feel so sorry for him that—

"But I won't," she broke off suddenly. "I shall never marry any man unless I love him better than I love pictures, and that will be loving him very much indeed."

So absorbed was she that she did not look up when Miss Henshawe came in and took a seat next her.

"So art is second with you, after all," said Miss Henshawe.

Nan jumped. "Oh, it is you! How you startled me. What do you mean?"

"Mean? That Bamford man is head-over-ears in love with you. It is beautiful to see a man so absorbed in some one besides himself."

"I don't see anything beautiful about it," said Nan crossly, "and there isn't any 'it.' He is an old teacher of mine, and he very naturally called on me when he came to New York."

Miss Henshawe laughed. "And he very naturally is jealous of Mr. Parrish, and he very naturally wants to buy my miniature of you."

Nan jumped again. "How do you know?"

"Because while you were saying good-by to Minerva he asked me to sell it to him."

"If you ever do—"

"I didn't. You needn't get so excited. I intend to keep it to exhibit. That is what I did it for. He is very nice-looking, and I am not so sure that you wouldn't do well to marry him."

"I shan't. I'll paint all my life if I starve to death doing it."

"I said that once, but it has occurred to me several times since that I was a fool. After all, life is more than art. That is a well-rounded sentence, and I'll leave it with you to muse over. I get out here. I am going to dine with a happy woman. I'll tell you about her some day. Adieu!"

When Nan went to her room after dinner it seemed full of women. All the room-mates were at home, and two other girls dropped in to chat a while. Nan made it evident that she wished to be left alone, and she spent the whole evening over "A Painter's Camp" which she held upside down.

CHAPTER X.

NAN had become quite friendly with a Miss Madison who sat opposite her at the table. Miss Madison was a middle-aged woman who "wrote for the papers," and always spoke of herself as a "literary woman." "She looks like an old-time blue-stocking," Miss Henshawe remarked, the first time she saw her, and Nan thought that the sentence described Miss Madison perfectly.

Miss Madison and Nan chatted a great deal, especially at luncheon, when they came in later than some of the other boarders. Nan was always glad when Miss Madison was there, for then she did not so much notice the conversation of the medical students about their "subjects." Miss Madison had only one room-mate, and she was out nearly every evening, so Nan often spent an evening with her.

Miss Madison was a theosophist, and she at once began to try to convert Nan to her faith. She often invited the girl to attend the theosophical meetings with her, and Nan, who had begun to have a keen relish for all kinds of New York life, said that she would be glad to go.

The first thing which struck Nan's eyes when

they entered the room where the meeting was to be held was a large portrait of Madam Blavatsky. The picture had a queer attraction for Nan, for the eyes seemed to move.

Miss Madison excused herself a moment, and went to speak to some acquaintances. Nan improved the opportunity to look about and see how the people looked. She wished she could sketch them; they belonged to a new type.

Miss Madison came back presently, and the "meeting went in." The leader read a few selections from the Book of Silence. Next a man went to the platform and read a paper on something which pretended to explain something about the symbolism of the Greek Cross. Nan could not understand it at all. As Grandma Wynkoop would have said, she could not "make head or tail of it." Miss Madison sat with a rapt expression on her face, and Nan wondered if the fault were hers, if she were stupid. She tried to catch a sentence occasionally and remember it. But by the time she had learned it another would strike her as being more ridiculous, and she would try to remember that. At last she came away with nothing but a reference to "the sound of the soundless sound." These words were uttered in a most impressive manner. Nan gathered also that the present time was a most momentous period, and that, as the end of the century drew nearer, strange happenings might be expected.

Madam Blavatsky, or H. P. B. as the speaker called her, was even now sending messages to the faithful, who were exhorted to keep their loins girt.

Nan several times stifled a wild desire to laugh. As she told Miss Jamieson afterward, she could have stood it better if she could have poked somebody at the funny places. She could not poke Miss Madison, for obvious reasons.

After the paper was finished several men and one woman discussed it, but Nan did not get any light.

As they reached the street, Miss Madison asked, "Did you enjoy it? You must know something about theosophy to enjoy such a meeting. It was an unusually fine one. As you go deeper into theosophy you will see light breaking in on you every step of the way."

"And hear the sound of the soundless sound, I suppose," thought Nan. "I enjoyed it," she said aloud, "and how I did want to sketch some of the faithful," she added to herself.

"Come up to my room, and I will give you some theosophical literature," said Miss Madison, as they went into the house.

Miss Madison always kept a photograph of Madam Blavatsky on her mantel. Nan stood before it. The eyes had the same peculiarity as those in the portrait in the hall, they followed one around the room.

"That portrait of the great adept presents her in one of her most gentle and sympathetic moods," said Miss Madison, looking over her bookshelves.

"How long ago did she die?" Nan asked, thinking she ought to say something.

"She departed from her physical body in 1891," replied Miss Madison impressively.

"Oh!" said Nan.

"It was the greatest crisis we have ever been through, but we have weathered it. In fact, there have been new life and energy since her departure. No doubt that it was best for theosophy that she went. She had made all her preparations; she knew that she must soon depart from her physical body. No doubt she is using in other, higher ways, the power which she formerly expended in maintaining her body. She is, no doubt, training a new instrument. As Mr. Christianson said, we may expect wonderful revelations soon. I wish you would go with me to the next meeting. I don't know just what the subject of the paper will be, but it will be an application of the philosophy of the transient to the elucidation of the changeless. It will be very helpful, and I should like you to hear it.

"Now you need a course of reading, and I will give you a brief one. Read 'Theosophy simply Put,' 'The Ocean of Theosophy,' 'the Key to Theosophy,' 'Septenary Man,' 'Isis Unveiled,'

and the 'Light on the Path.' The last is a helpful devotional book. I haven't all the books I mentioned, but I will give you three, and I will get the others for you."

As Nan came down the stairs Miss Jamieson met her. "Did you go?" she asked.

"Yes. Look at all this literature—I had to take it, or break Miss Madison's heart. I can't see how such a level-headed woman as she seems to be can believe in this sort of thing."

"Nor I," assented Miss Jamieson. "She is probably delighted that you went with her. She used to invite me, but I never went, and I think I offended her."

"She talks as if I wanted to believe it, and loads me down with literature. I think a good course in theosophy would drive me crazy. My head is full of a jumble of Karma, the Microcosm of the Macrocosm, the Upanishads, and a lot more words I can't pronounce. I don't see why these people in this house always insist on taking me to their 'doings.' Miss Christian Scientist—I forget her name,—asks me every few days to go to her church with her."

"Oh, they know that you have only lately come to the city. They think that you are impressionable, and that you will make an easy convert. We have a spiritualist here too. She is a new-comer, though."

"I shan't go to her meetings, no matter how

much she asks me. That much is sure. But the Christian Science woman is so sweet and so sure that she never can get ill and die, that she interests me. She talks to me every chance she has. She says she is thinking good thoughts about me all the time, and I can't be ill or sad. Thoughts are things, you know. She says she was very seriously ill, and that 'the science' cured her all at once."

"Humph! I should like to ask her what she had. Perhaps people are cured of nervous diseases, that is, diseases which they think they have. Miss Watson says she would never, under any circumstances, have a physician, and lots of them would rather die than have a doctor. It is great fun to hear Miss Watson and the medical students argue. If she is right there would be no need of any of them, would there? I asked Miss Watson once if she didn't expect that something would have to happen to her to take her out of the world."

"What did she say?"

"Oh, something to the effect that if faith were perfect enough there would be no death. I suggested that the world might be uncomfortably full after a while, if every body kept alive, but she went on eating Charlotte russe, with that calm, sweet expression on her face, and I almost wished I had a hobby if it would make me so happy.

"But there is no danger for me; I have seen too many hobbies mounted to want one long. But you would better be careful, or some of these people will pick you up and set you on their steeds and gallop away with you."

"I wish they would leave me alone. There is Miss Jordan, the vegetarian woman. She actually drives me wild. Why doesn't she stay in her room and eat apples and potatoes, instead of coming to the table and telling us all sorts of things about our roast beef. Then there is the widow, Mrs. McPherson, she wants me to drink hot water instead of coffee."

"Yes, I know them all. I'm sorry for you, for I have been through all you are going through, except the theosophy. That I refused, point blank."

"People are always asking me to take flats with them," Nan went on. "I've had three offers from women in this house, and three girls at the art school have asked me to take a studio with them next year."

"Don't go with any of them. You are much too young for that sort of thing. Girls are always getting the studio mania. They think if they have a low couch covered with a Bagdad rug, some Japanese screens, an old copper tea-kettle, and some pieces of pottery, the stuff will make artists of them. As for flats, every self-supporting female in New York has had one or

means to have one. Every now and then a girl disappears, and it is always safe to say that she has taken a flat. She is sure to come back, a sadder, if not a wiser, woman. So don't let any one talk you into a studio or a flat scheme. You would much better have your time free than to be cooking and marketing. It is all very well to have an apartment if you have some one to keep house for you, as Miss Henshawe's sister does for her. You see I am afraid that somebody is going to have too much influence over you."

"You needn't worry; I have a will of my own, as you may find out some day. If I do fly off at a tangent it won't be a theosophical one, I assure you. I really wish you would go next time. It is great fun."

"I won't, though. I shall not waste good time which I might spend in sleep."

CHAPTER XI.

NAN's little hoard of money was exhausted the first of April. Besides the amount which was to take her home, and which she would not touch, under any circumstances, she had the four dollars for her board that week, and about half a dollar for emergencies. She had known that this time was near, but she would not face the worst till she must. A slight illness, and the consequent doctor's bill, had shortened her stay by one week, and ten dollars loaned to an impecunious art student, who now frankly confessed her inability to pay her debts, meant the loss of two weeks more to Nan. Evidently she must go home at once, unless she could find something to do. But what could she do? She put the shabby little purse in her pocket, and went to look up Miss Jamieson.

She was alone, and Nan stated her dilemma.

"Of course you must not go home now. It is only about six weeks till closing time, and you must do the full year's work. What is the matter with borrowing from me?"

Nan shook her head decidedly. "No, never, but I thank you just the same. I didn't come to

you to have you offer to lend me money, but I thought you might be able to think of something I can do to help myself."

"Let's see what we can find? Where is the *Herald*. We'll look over the wants. What can you do?"

Nan shook her head dolefully. "Nothing but daub paint. I've spent all my money and I can't ever come back, and I have learned just enough to show me that I don't know anything. At the same time, I love painting better than ever. I *will* come back and study, even if it takes me years to earn money enough. I'll even teach school to earn it. I said I never would, but I will. I'll teach all next year and save enough money to pay my board here another year. I'll go up a flight higher to a room with more women in it, if necessary. I don't believe I would love painting so much if I had no gift for it."

"Of course you wouldn't," said Miss Jamieson, absently. She was running over the columns of the *Herald*. "You couldn't keep books a little?"

"No; I hate figures, and I don't know the first thing about bookkeeping. I told you that I can't do anything, so there's no use in looking. I'll go home and brush up my studies a little so that I can pass an examination for a teacher's certificate. Don't take any more trouble."

"There seems to be nothing here for you. You would better advertise."

"For what?"

"I'll think of something. I believe in the law of supply and demand. There must be something in this big town for a bright girl like you to do. You have your afternoons, and if you can make ever so little it will help you out. I wish you knew anything about bookkeeping, I might get some work in our house. Why don't you talk to that Miss Jennings, in your room? She gets her living somehow, and seems to know how to get along without giving much time to it. She paints a water color portrait now and then, or does a crayon portrait. Winter before last she actually taught a class in calisthenics in night schools, and she didn't know any more about calisthenics than I do. She went to a teacher and paid twenty-five dollars to be coached for the position, and she got along very well, not to say anything of making three dollars an hour. She has confidence enough for anything. I went down one night to see her teach, and she carried the affair off like a specialist.

"The next thing she did was to teach clay modeling, and I suppose she learned how to model by teaching it. She writes a little, too, I think, for I have seen letters from publishers at her plate. Could you write at all?"

"No, I never thought of such a thing. I might possibly illustrate some day, though; I have been working at pen-and-ink all winter."

"Why don't you try to sell some of your sketches?"

"They are not good enough."

"How do you know? Has any one told you so?"

"No, but I simply can't go to editors and ask them to look at my work."

"You'll get over that nonsense before you make your living by art. You must have more faith in yourself. It is more than half the battle. The world is very apt to take you at your own estimate. Are you going?"

"Yes; I am so tired and gloomy I'm going to sleep and forget who I am."

"Don't get the blues, whatever happens. Keep turning things over in your mind, and we'll both watch the advertisements. We'll be sure to find something to keep you here."

A couple of evenings later Miss Jamieson tapped at Nan's door. "Come down to the parlor; I want to talk to you."

"Come in. They are out, every woman of them. I was going to a lecture at Cooper, but when I found they were going out, I stayed in to celebrate."

"I think perhaps I am on the trail of something for you," and Miss Jamieson took some clippings from her purse. "There doesn't seem to be anything just desirable, but this might do. It's a lazy woman, I suppose, who wants some

one to attend to her correspondence. She is in Brooklyn, but you would better answer it. You write a fashionable hand, and she will like that. Put on your green gown and let your hair stick out around your ears, and she can't resist you. Even if it brings you only two or three dollars a week, you would better take it."

"But two or three dollars wouldn't pay my board, even if I lived on the roof."

"No; but we'll find something else. Let's see some of your pen-and-ink work."

Nan obediently brought her sketches, and Miss Jamieson looked at them critically.

"I don't see why they are not good," was her verdict. "Pick out some of your best things and send them to editors. Some of this work is excellent. That small youngster offering a toadstool to a toad is very clever. Send it to some paper which has a children's corner. You are too afraid to be successful. I'm going downstairs to ask Miss Seymour if she knows of any place where you can get illustrating to do. She works for a publishing house. She is a proof-reader, and she may know of something for you. Meantime, you are not to pack your trunk. If I find Miss Seymour in I'll come back and report to you."

Miss Seymour was in, and presently Miss Jamieson came back with some papers in her hands.

"I have it," she announced triumphantly. "The

very thing you want. Miss Seymour says this paper, *The Educational Headlight*, teacher's journal, you know, wants a 'special artist,' and the editor asked her people if they knew of some one. She says she likes your looks, and she likes your sketches, which I took down without your knowledge. You may go to this editor man, and say she sent you. So you must take your sketches and go to see him to-morrow. The work is easy; they want flowers and triangles and other geometrical things, and decorative heads for Arbor Day and Fourth of July and such occasions. You can do them if you only think so. Now I must go down and darn stockings. Good luck to you!"

Nan felt like a girl in a story book as she waited for the editor. He was by no means a formidable youth, but he had a "teachery" manner, which reminded her of Mr. Bamford. The teacher-editor seemed pleased with the work Nan showed him, and he bought the toad picture at once, saying it would do nicely for teachers to reproduce on the blackboard, and it would correlate with a lesson on the toad which he intended to use in the next number of this paper. He then gave her some suggestions which he wished her to follow, and politely escorted her to the elevator.

"If I only suit," thought Nan, as she went home. She got out her materials and went to work with a will. "At any rate, I will have some

money for my toad picture, and it will be the first I ever earned. It won't be the last by any means."

After an hour or two she went over to the Astor library to get some hints for illustrations of Esquimo children, and she spent the evening over her picture, as Miss Tarbell called it. Miss Tarbell was much interested in Nan's new venture, for she was a subscriber to *The Headlight*, and kept the bound volumes on her desk.

The next afternoon Nan drew a dandelion in blossom, a dandelion gone to seed, besides cutting up the blossom, and drawing all the parts. One of the art students who lived in a suburban town furnished the dandelion, and promised to bring Nan any flowers she needed. Nan made, also, a border of dandelions conventionalized, an initial letter, and a tail piece, working in the long-suffering dandelion. This work was finished in Miss Jamieson's room in the evening, for her room-mates were out and Nan's were in.

"I feel that I ought to steep some dandelions and make a tea," said Nan, as she wiped her pen. "I can't think of anything else to do. I suppose this is correlation, about which the editor talked so much. He talked three quarters of an hour, and I can remember only two words,—pedagogy and correlation. I hope I looked as if I knew what they meant. Correlation means that you have pictures of dandelions and sing songs about

them, and speak pieces about them, and have a botany lesson on the dandelion. I really want to be pedagogical and correlative. I think I must drink some dandelion tea."

"You would better come out to the drug store and have some soda with me," laughed Miss Jamieson. "It's only nine o'clock, and I'm very thirsty."

They had their soda, and then they walked up to one of the little parks which were gay with tulips and hyacinths. The trees were beginning to show their green; spring was in the air. Late as it was, a few children were playing tag, their mothers were seated on benches enjoying a brief rest. Young lovers sat with their arms around each other, perfectly oblivious of onlookers. The electric lights showed their faces as plainly as daylight, and Nan, as usual, studied them as she passed. She was getting to have a passion for faces, and sometimes she forgot herself and stared, so absorbed was she.

After a half hour Nan and Miss Jamieson walked home. "Yes; the city is lovely now," said Miss Jamieson, in reply to some remark of Nan's, "but in a few weeks it will be like a furnace. You'll get away, though, before it is really hot. We people who have to stay here all summer have nothing good to say for New York."

"I'm afraid I'll never come back, and I hate to think of leaving," said Nan, mournfully.

"Oh, you'll be on your feet the first thing you know, with your pictures and correlation. Keep up your courage. You are too young to have the blues."

When Nan carried her work to the editor he was pleased with it, and he kindly told her that she bade fair to suit them. He gave her a new assignment, which was to illustrate a lesson on bees. She was to draw a drone, a queen bee, a cell, a piece of honeycomb, besides making more initial letters and head and tail pieces, wherein the busy bee was to figure.

A mathematical lesson was also to be illustrated, and she was asked to make gill, pint, and quart measures, and the various dry measures. These, with a hint for a blackboard sketch for closing exercises, completed the editor's orders. As she left he presented her with an autograph copy of his monograph on Pestalozzi, which Miss Wynkoop promptly gave to Miss Tarbell.

This new work took considerable time, for Nan could not make a satisfactory decoration for closing exercises. She consulted Miss Jamieson, but although she was sympathetic, she had no views on the subject. At last Nan finished the design, and submitted it. The editor made a few criticisms, and offered some suggestions, which Nan followed out at once, and the design was accepted.

"There will be nothing more for a week," said

Mr. Foote. "Perhaps you would like a check for the work you have done."

Nan thought she would. It was on the day of the week when her board was due, and she had just thirty-seven cents in her purse, besides the money put aside to take her home.

She pocketed the check for eight dollars with thankfulness. It meant two weeks' board, and an opportunity for two weeks' study. The editor promised to let her know when he needed her again, and she hoped that would be soon.

Nan had walked a great deal of late, because she couldn't afford car-fare, but now she felt so rich that she went up to see Miss Henshawe.

That enthusiastic young woman embraced her and inquired where she had kept herself. Nan told the history of the last two days. She felt more hopeful now, and she could afford to tell how low her finances had been.

"Why, you poor thing," cried Miss Henshawe. "Why didn't you come to me? I've been getting orders, and I'm simply rolling in wealth. You look thin. Do you get enough to eat at that house? Are you sure? At any rate the food is not what you ought to have. I am afraid your people will think that you have changed. It's so fortunate that you dropped in just now, for Minerva and I have been talking about you, and we wanted to see you. In fact, we have a plan in which you are concerned. Minerva is going to a

wedding next week. An old school friend of hers is to be married, and Minerva is to be bridesmaid. It's a ridiculous match, but it is sweet, too. This man is a widower with four children, and his wife is dead."

"Naturally," assented Nan.

Miss Henshawe laughed. "Where was I? O, yes; this woman, Serena McDowell—what a name—is going to marry her old love and mother all his four children. Minerva is going to be bridesmaid, as I told you before. This narrative of mine has something to do with you, though you don't see the point yet. Now here it comes. Minerva will be away a month, for while she is west, she is going to visit some more friends and a host of relations. She insists that she can't leave me alone, and she says she will feel perfectly easy about me if you will come and stay with me. Say you will come. We will have great fun."

Nan hesitated. "You are perfectly sure that you are not doing this to help me?"

"Nonsense! Didn't I tell you that Minerva and I had the whole thing planned before I knew that you were broke?"

Miss Henshawe occasionally indulged in a little slang.

"We will have a beautiful time," she went on. "I can cook several things in a chafing-dish, and quite often they are fit to eat. I hope you know something about cooking, but if you don't, never

mind. We can go out to dinner every night. There is a house in the next block where we can get good table board."

"I'll come if you will let me pay half the expenses."

"That wouldn't be fair, for you are coming to chaperon me. But you may pay half the expense of the culinary department, since you are so very independent."

"I am. I have eight dollars and thirty-seven cents. No, eight dollars and thirty-two cents; it cost me five cents to get up here. I owe no man anything, neither any woman, except the matron, and I shall pay her to-night for last week's board. I am the special artist of *The Educational Headlight*. Who says I have not a career?"

"You have, if you don't marry and settle down. Sometimes I hope you will, and sometimes I hope you won't. I believe Minerva's old-maid friend's marriage has set me off into a romantic state of mind."

"No; it hasn't. I knew you were romantic when I first met you. By the way, I wonder why people always say marry and settle down. When I marry I shall soar instead of settling down. And I shall never marry any man unless he loves paints as well as I do."

"Don't, I beg you, ever fall in love with an art student. A man art student is good for nothing. There is Basil Parish, he is an absolute

cumberer of the ground. He really has talent, and he might amount to something if he would cut his hair and go to work in earnest. But he spends most of his time dusting his china and bric-a-brac. A regular old maid! You haven't been to see his studio yet; what a shame. I'll get Minerva to take us before she goes. He is very proud of his studio, and his things are so much nicer than mine that I turn green with envy, though I wouldn't have him know it for the world. And Minerva goes about and says how much better his arrangements are than mine, till I feel like pinching her. It's great fun to see him making tea in a leaky copper kettle which he picked up in some old junk-shop down town."

Nan declined Miss Henshawe's invitation to remain for dinner. It was the night when she wrote her usual weekly letter home, and she never neglected this duty. As she ate her dinner she was thankful that she could go to stay with Miss Henshawe, for she felt that she needed a change.

CHAPTER XII.

THE change from the boarding-house to the studio was an excellent thing for Nan, who had been running down for several weeks. If she had been at home her mother would have brewed home-made bitters for her, made out of divers roots and herbs. This she always dispensed in the spring to such members of her family as were "complaining." Nan was glad that she need not take the bitters, but she felt that she needed something, for she had not her usual strength. After a few days with Miss Henshawe, however, she began to improve, and Miss Henshawe told her she looked much better.

They did their own cooking, and their dinners were a success, thanks to Nan. She very soon saw that Miss Henshawe's culinary knowledge did not extend beyond chocolate, salad dressing and Welsh rarebit, and Nan took complete charge of the kitchen department and the marketing. At home she was considered an artistic young lady who knew next to nothing about cooking, and when Mrs. Wyncoop heard that Nan was doing the catering and cooking for herself and Miss Henshawe, she remarked, with much pity in

her tone, "Poor children." But Miss Henshawe and her friends praised Nan's efforts so much that her head was nearly turned.

Miss Minerva left her little room to Nan, and the girl thoroughly enjoyed it. It made her think of her own little room at home, and when she had pinned up some of her sketches she could almost imagine herself under the roof of the brown house. She told herself that if she did come back next year she would not go back to that boarding house. She would find some other way to live, even if she had to take a hall-room and do light housekeeping. Miss Frost had tried to frighten her out of this plan by telling her that she would become queer and talk to herself, but she thought she might better be too lonely than to have too much society.

She had found her room-mates quite agreeable, and had managed to get through the winter very comfortably. Miss Tarbell and Miss Stearns were perfect ladies, and Miss Jennings was by no means objectionable. But Miss Stearns had left, and gone to live in a flat with some friends, and for a few days the empty bed had been occupied by transients. Nan bore it with as much philosophy as she could command, till a new specimen, who called herself Miss Du Bois, arrived. She was a most unprepossessing individual, who was untidy to a degree, and who, to the disappointment of her three room-mates, never spent an

evening out. She was always at home, seated at the table reading books from the circulating library. She kept the light burning till midnight for several nights, till Miss Tarbell remonstrated, when she took the lamp in the closet and read as long as she pleased. Nan grew very nervous. She feared the woman would fall asleep and knock the lamp over. She never slept till Miss Du Bois went to bed, and once in bed she was likely to rise and roam about the room. Once Nan awoke in a fright. Miss Jennings was burying her face in her pillow and shaking like a leaf. Nan sat up in bed too scared to speak. "What is the matter?" she asked, as soon as she could find her voice.

"It's that terrible thing, Miss Du Bois. She was standing at the foot of my bed, looking at me."

"Are you sure you weren't dreaming," whispered Nan, patting Miss Jennings as if she were a frightened child. "She is in bed now."

"Yes; I didn't dare move till she went away. I shall never, never pass another night in this room unless she leaves. I believe she is insane."

Miss Jennings refused to go back to her bed, so Nan made room for her beside her. The next morning the three, for Miss Tarbell joined them, went to the matron, and asked to have Miss Du Bois removed. The matron promised to make the change, and Miss Du Bois was not there the

next evening. Still, Nan had a fear of other transients, and she was glad to go with Miss Henshawe.

Nan worked very faithfully during these last few weeks, for she felt that she might not soon have another opportunity for study. Besides, she did considerable work for *The Educational Headlight*. The editor was planning his fall numbers, and Nan spent some of her spare time in drawing pumpkins, for a lesson on that vegetable. She also made decorative heads for Thanksgiving and Christmas. She enjoyed the work, and felt that she was improving.

Soon after she went to stay with Miss Henshawe, she received a letter from the Brooklyn lady who had advertised for an amanuensis. Nan had forgotten that she had replied to it, and she was surprised at a request to call at once. Nan went that same afternoon, dressed in her best clothes, as Miss Jamieson had advised. She found that the lady, whose name was Mrs. Richardson, had a few notes to write every day, and her household accounts to keep, and she thought she was overburdened. Nan wrote some letters, filed others, added a few columns of figures, and Mrs. Richardson expressed her satisfaction. When Nan left she had agreed to spend two hours on Tuesdays and Fridays of each week, for which she was to receive three dollars.

"I can live on this money, and what I can

make working for *The Educational Headlight*, and I believe I shall dare come back next year," said Nan, as she hailed a car which would take her to the bridge.

She found her visits at Mrs. Richardson's quite amusing. The lady's husband often came into the boudoir, where Nan sat at her desk. He was a very small man, and his wife was a large and very imposing woman. "Mr. and Mrs. Wilfer," Nan called them at once. He always addressed his wife as Precious, and she, in turn, always called him Treasure. He looked over the expenses of the preceding week, on Tuesday, and invariably said, "Precious, we are spending too much money." At this juncture, Precious would put her handkerchief to her eyes, and say she knew that she was an impractical little thing, and that she never ought to have married a man like Treasure. This always brought Treasure on his knees, and a tender scene followed which was very embarrassing to the young lady at the desk.

Nan and Miss Henshawe got a good deal of fun out of the Richardsons. Miss Henshawe, as head of the house, declared that she was Treasure, and if Nan had anything particularly good for dinner, would insist that Precious was spending too much money. If Nan went out and was uncertain about the time of her return, she would pin on the screen, which they called their bulletin board, a note like this: "Treasure, I have gone

to Miss Frost's. Back as soon as I can.—Precious.”

Altogether, the two girls enjoyed their house-keeping. Nan thoroughly liked Miss Henshawe, for she found that there was much sense behind all the affectation. As Nan told her, she was very sensible when in the bosom of her family, when she forgot to put on airs.

Miss Frost was a frequent visitor to the studio, more for Nan's sake than Miss Henshawe's, however. They often dined together, Miss Frost and Miss Henshawe taking turns at playing hostess. Mr. Frost stopped on his way to France, and he threw new life into the rather dull existence of the three women. Miss Henshawe frankly acknowledged that she simply worshiped him, and she took it for granted that Nan did. Nan did not worship him, she was not even sure that she liked him. He made her feel very small and insignificant and country-bred, and it takes a large stock of the Christian graces to make one like such a person.

Nan came home one afternoon after her two hours with Precious, to find both Miss and Mr. Frost in the studio, and Miss Henshawe in the act of displaying her pictures, Nan's very own pictures. The portraits were standing on the couch, in the order in which they were painted, and Miss Henshawe was pointing out the improvement in the work since September.

Nan was angry. Her poor little pictures! She had firmly refused to let Mr. Frost see her work, and now Clara Henshawe was showing the things of which she was most ashamed. Nan slipped out of the studio, hoping that no one had seen her, and shut herself in her room. The Frosts did not see her, but Miss Henshawe did, and she followed her.

"Are you ill, Nan? Oh, say, you are not angry because I showed your pictures? How silly you are. I am proud of your progress, and I just got them out, that is all. It was all my fault. The Frosts had nothing to do with it. If you don't stop looking at me that way I'll drown myself and be 'a body, a moist, damp, unpleasant body,'" and Miss Henshawe struck a dramatic attitude.

Nan laughed, Miss Henshawe was so ridiculous.

"It looks so vain of me, as if I wanted to show my poor little pictures. I don't mind Miss Frost, but I do mind that big Frost man. He has been everywhere, and seen everything, and done everything, and what can he see in my miserable little daubs?"

"Sits the wind in that quarter?" thought Miss Henshawe. "He seems to enjoy looking at them. He says you have a future, and he is the last man to encourage a girl to go on with art unless he thinks she ought to. Wait, and I'll tell you what I heard him say. I was lugging out more canvases,—he was looking at that portrait of the

Italian girl—and he kept looking at it, and whistled. He always does that when he is pleased. Then he said, ‘Jess, my dear, you knew what you were about when you brought this little girl down from the country.’

“‘She has it in her,’ said Miss Frost.

“‘She has it in her, and, what is more to the point, she can bring it out on canvas. Paris, I should say, after a year or two more. Watch her closely, and don’t let her get any mannerisms; young painters are so apt to copy someone’s faults. She has a straight-out-from-the-shoulder style of painting which I like. Oh, yes, she has it in her, but she is too good-looking for a single woman, and she’ll marry and spoil it all.’

“So there, Miss Annice Wynkoop.”

“No, I won’t marry and spoil it all,” said Nan. “Since you really overheard all this, you dear old eavesdropper, I must believe Mr. Frost meant it. And he knows too much about pictures to be entirely mistaken. Clara Henshawe, I am coming back next year. I don’t know how I shall live, but I’m coming as sure as the autumn comes.”

“Good girl. You’ll get along, with health and courage, and I’ll be proud of you yet. Did you do any marketing?” asked Miss Henshawe, suddenly coming down to practical life.

“My dear, I forgot it. I’ll go right out.”

“No, I’ll go. You look utterly used up. Lie still, and as soon as the Frosts are gone I’ll rush

out and get something that I know enough to cook. I believe that Brooklyn trip tires you more than anything else you do."

Nan was so tired that she was obedient. She lay quietly, but her thoughts were very busy building air-castles. Mr. Frost's praise meant a great deal to her, and she felt that she was repaid for her hard work of the winter. "Oh, I must come back next year, I must," she cried, with her face buried in the pillow. "I want to come back more than I wanted to come at first. I can paint, I knew I could, and I am so glad and thankful."

When Miss Henshawe called Nan to dinner the table presented a festive appearance. There was one splendid red rose in a tall jar by way of decoration, and the substantial part of the feast consisted of roast chicken and green peas. On the tiny buffet Clara had placed her one cut-glass dish, which was filled with strawberries.

"Why, it's a spread," cried Nan. "Clara Henshawe, you don't mean to say that you cooked that chicken!"

"Delicatessen store," replied Miss Henshawe, laconically. "It's in honor of you. I am so puffed up with pride and conceit over Mr. Frost's opinion of your work that I had to do something to celebrate. I could have hugged that man; he's an angel."

"Perhaps he would have enjoyed the hugging," said Nan, beginning to carve the chicken.

"I was afraid he would prefer someone else."

"I don't know anyone but you who has any desire to be so demonstrative. For my part, I'm much obliged to him for this chicken. I'm as hungry as a bear. The peas are very nice, and you didn't burn the potatoes."

"You are so patronizing. I'll burn them yet, if you miss anything. I'm really improving in my cooking; I can see it whether you do or not. Mr. Frost sails Wednesday."

"So I understood. Your sudden changes of subject are sometimes a trifle perplexing, Clara."

"He and Miss Frost are going sketching up the Bronx Saturday, and we are invited. That is, I suppose, Miss Wynkoop is invited, and Miss Henshawe is asked because it wouldn't be polite to leave her out. I'm going, whether I'm invited or not."

"It is good for you to be humble," said Nan, passing a saucer of berries. "Is it a kind of a picnic?"

"Yes, I imagine so. There will be a row on the river, and more or less painting by the geniuses of the party, and a general good time. What shall we wear?"

"Blue serge jacket and skirt and a shirt waist. It is so comfortable to have only one dress. It saves one's brain for other problems. Now you, who have several dresses, will lie awake to-night thinking which to wear."

"If I were as good-looking as you are, Nan Wynkoop, I wouldn't think twice about clothes, but as it is, or as I am, rather—

"Really, Clara, I'll wash the dishes without all that flattery. Don't be so exceedingly personal, that's a dear, good child."

"I'm glad you are handsome, and I don't see any harm in mentioning it, now and then. As I often tell you, you deserve no credit for your good looks. I'll dry the dishes for you, then I'll show you the work I did to-day. It's good in its humble way, though no one has raved over it."

CHAPTER XIII.

"A PERFECTLY ideal day," was Miss Henshawe's verdict, as she reached the studio on the evening of the day she called "Bronx day." "It was simply perfect, wasn't it, Nan? Will you give me that little yellow pillow? It's in the big chair. I hate to bother you, but I'm so comfortable that I'd rather do it than move."

"You have at least seven pillows on that couch," said Nan, throwing her the yellow one.

"I need eight, and this one just fits into the most tired place. Wasn't it a lovely day?"

"I don't know," said Nan, almost crossly. "I'm all stung with mosquitoes till I shouldn't recognize myself if I looked in the glass, I've taken the skin off my hands rowing, and I quarreled with Mr. Parrish. I believe I'm cross."

"I know it, child. I have realized it for the last three-quarters of an hour, and I suspected it all the way down town. What is the matter? Did Mr. Frost make love to you?"

"Clara Henshawe!"

"You needn't yell at me like that, I merely asked for information. I'm sure I thought he did; he looked like a man who was making love-

At least, he looked as I suppose a man looks when he makes love. It is so long since I saw one do it I have almost forgotten, more's the pity. I don't see why you look so indignant. You might rather feel complimented at the suggestion. I wish he would fall in love with me, he would have a prosperous wooing."

"Clara Henshawe, I don't see how you can say such brazen things. You make me blush for you."

"Oh, you needn't take the trouble. I don't see any harm in my saying things when I think them. I simply adore Teddy Frost, bless him!" And Miss Henshawe blew a kiss from the tips of her fingers.

"What did you go and blister your hands for?" Miss Henshawe said after a few moments' silence. "I saw you rowing as if you meant to get your living by it. I sat still and let Basil Parrish row me around."

No answer from Nan, and Miss Henshawe started afresh.

"Did you and Mr. Frost quarrel?"

"No; what an idea. What would we quarrel over? I hope when I quarrel I'll know enough to select some one of my own caliber, like Mr. Parrish, for instance."

"Then, what in goodness' name ails you? Are you ill?"

"No; Clara, if you must know. I feel a little

sad to-night. This seems like the end of so much to me. Miss Frost is going away next week, and I leave, myself, very soon. I don't know that I shall ever come back. Of course I want to see my people, and I long to spend a summer home, but this life suits me so entirely that my heart is broken when I realize that this may be the last of it." Nan's voice was rather shaky before she finished speaking, and she gathered up her jacket, hat, and gloves, and went to her room and threw herself on her bed. She lay there an hour or so, thinking, thinking. At last she rose and went out to Clara.

"I was very selfish to leave you. I know you are lonely."

"Never mind. I had a nap while you were gone. But I am wide-awake now and ready for a talk. Lie down here, there is plenty of room, and I'll give you half my pillows."

"Nan, I believe that man loves you."

Nan jumped to her feet. "What man?"

"Of whom were we talking a little while ago? Mr. Frost, of course."

"Clara, I don't see why you persist in talking in this fashion. I'm not so foolish as to think all you think. Your imagination runs away with you."

"Nothing of the kind. I can tell the signs. I've seen Theodore Frost a great many times during the last four years, but I have never seen

the look in his eyes that I saw to-day more than once, and when he was looking at you, too."

"Then he is a flirt. Perhaps he thinks that I am a green little girl from the country, and he can amuse himself with me. Clara, I wish you hadn't put that idea into my head."

"I didn't; I put a very different idea there, or I tried to; but you wouldn't harbor it. I didn't say hard things about somebody who has just given me a perfect day."

"I didn't want to say hard things till you made me. I didn't really think them. It is just this way, Clara. Miss Frost really likes me, and she has been more than good to me. Mr. Frost is very devoted to his sister, and he tries to be especially nice to her protégée. This, I repeat, is all there is of it, and—"

"What do you mean by 'it'?"

"What you have just been talking of, of course. Clara, don't be so hateful. I haven't a soul here but you, and you make me very uncomfy."

Miss Henshawe turned and smoothed the tumbled head. "It shan't be made uncomfortable. The big man doesn't like it, and he didn't look at it as if he wanted to say all kinds of things, and nobody shall ever hint at such a thing again."

"You are too ridiculous, Clara. I don't know why I like you. But I do, and I shall be wanting to see you in Macedonia long before you come."

"Good child. Is Mr. Bamford there?"

"I suppose so, yes. He always is. Why?"

"I was wondering if he left during the summer?"

"No; he and his mother keep house in Macedonia."

"What are you going to do with him this summer?"

"Nothing. Why, again?"

"Oh, because I'm afraid he'll make you stay up there. That man has an awful will. If he liked me and I didn't like him, I should be afraid of him."

"I'm not. He hasn't the shadow of a claim on me. If he begins to take matters for granted, and set the Macedonians to thinking we are engaged I'll make it very plain that we are not."

"Poor Mr. Bamford!"

"No; it's poor Nan Wynkoop. I don't see why he should set his heart on me, when there are plenty of girls in Macedonia who would be very nice to him. I suppose I've got to hear a great deal of nonsense about woman's sphere. No, I won't. I'm going to be as hateful as I can."

"Poor Mr. Bamford!"

"Clara, you must be in a sentimental mood. You always are; you must be more sentimental than ever."

"I am, a little. Nannie, wouldn't it be nice if we could go abroad this summer?"

"I haven't imagination enough to consider such a thing. I don't suppose I'll be able to go for forty-seven years. I hope you will, though."

"Didn't Mr. Frost tell you that he wished you were going?"

"Yes. What of it? He wanted to be polite."

"Of course. Didn't we have a nice day, Nan? Own up, now."

"Of course we did. I told them so. I hope I know enough to show that I am grateful for my mercies."

"It was nice. There was the row on the river, and the lunch *al fresco*, and then we all sketched, and sat around and told stories; then we had dinner at that dear little French restaurant. O dear, when shall we five meet again? Next fall, I suppose. Are you asleep, Nan?"

"Almost. It wasn't polite of me, when you were talking. But I can imagine what you were saying."

"Oh, you haven't lost much. It's time we were going to bed, Annice Wynkoop."

"So it is. I'm more tired than if I had painted all morning and been to Brooklyn in the afternoon."

The Frosts were to sail on Wednesday, at three o'clock. Nan was coming up from school at noon, when she saw a carriage standing before

her door. As she stepped into the vestibule she ran against Mr. Frost.

"Oh, well met, Miss Wynkoop. I've been ringing your bell for the last five minutes. Jessica is in the carriage; we stopped to get you and take you to the steamer to see us off. You'll go, I hope."

Miss Frost put her head out of the carriage, and added her request to her brother's.

"Of course, I shall be glad to go," Nan replied. "I'll run up and leave my traps," for she had a book and some brushes in her hands.

She was only gone a moment, but in that moment she had smoothed the rebellious hair, changed her gloves, and brushed her dress.

Miss Frost took her hand in hers, and held it for a block or two before releasing it.

"We were so afraid you would be out," she said. "It was stupid of me not to think of this before. I wish you were going with me, but one of these days you shall."

"Oh, that is too much to hope for, even for such a castle-builder as I am," said Nan, smiling back into Miss Frost's eyes.

"'Hitch your wagon to a star,'" quoted Mr. Frost. "You have simply got to study in Paris, so you may as well get accustomed to the idea. You see your friends will insist on expecting great things from that palette of yours."

"It's a most uncomfortable feeling to know

that one's friends are so complimentary that they expect too much of one," said Nan.

"Modesty is a refreshing spectacle in this degenerate age. Jess, my girl, take your last look at New York; we are almost at the wharf."

"I know it. I'll stand on the deck and watch the dear old city fade out of sight."

"Nonsense! You might rather stand with me in the bow of the boat and watch the old world dawn on you. I shan't draw a natural breath till I see Paris."

A few moments later the three stood on the deck together. There was plenty of time, and as Nan had never before been on an ocean-liner, Miss Frost and her brother showed her all over the ship. Presently other friends of Miss Frost's came on board and she was deluged with flowers and baskets of fruit.

"And I never so much as brought you a carnation," said Nan to her in a whisper, "and you have done so much for me. I wish I had whole bushels of sweet wild flowers from our meadows at home."

"I would rather have a bunch of flowers from your meadows than these, they don't mean anything. These people send them because everybody sends flowers to everybody when they sail. I've sent them myself. But your wild flowers would be sent because you loved me, I flatter myself."

"I do," said Nan. "I think about you by day and dream about you by night. You won't forget me while you are away? Whenever I hope for any success in my work you are somehow woven in with it. I don't believe I ever can do anything unless I am near you."

"Why, child, I didn't dream that I was all this to you. You dear little Nan Wynkoop."

"Why are you calling Miss Wynkoop names, and why do you have tears in your eyes? This will never do. I shan't take a teary woman to Paris with me. Go and speak to the Atkins, Jess, they have just come on, and in the mean time I'll take Miss Wynkoop for a promenade, so that she'll get an idea what pacing a steamer's deck is like, before she sails for Paris. We have just fifteen minutes left before the call to go ashore."

"Oh, let me say good-by to Miss Frost and go now. I'm afraid I shall be left."

"No; in that case you would be taken. If you go ashore you'll be left. Don't worry. I'll see that you get off in time. Now we'll pretend we are in mid-ocean, on our way to Paris."

They walked only a few rods, however, then they stood looking seaward. Nan sniffed the salt air, and felt adventurous, as adventurous as she did on that spring morning when she decided to go to New York. She would, she must go to Paris. The hope was worth living for; meantime,—

Mr. Frost's voice brought her to herself.

"I beg pardon, Mr. Frost."

"I was asking you the name of that town of yours up in the hills."

"Macedonia."

"Macedonia. When I was a little fellow and used to go to Sunday-school, we sang a tune beginning, 'There's a cry from Macedonia, come and help us.' I shall remember your town by that tune."

"It's a great town," said Nan, for the sake of saying something.

"Would a bit of Paris reach you safely if directed to you at Macedonia, N. Y.? Say a bit of a sketch which might give you some sort of a poor idea how Paris will look to you by and by."

"Oh, yes, thank you very much. It would reach me. There, I must go! See, people are going ashore."

"There is still time, but if you are nervous I'll take you now."

"I am a little nervous. Oh, there is Miss Frost."

The two women clasped each other, then Nan went down the gangway, and in a moment she was on the wharf, waving her hand to Miss Frost. Just then came the call, "All aboard and all ashore." Mr. Frost shook hands, said his good wishes for a pleasant summer, and disappeared up the gang plank. The great ship started on her way, and Nan went home, seeing visions and dreaming dreams.

CHAPTER XIV.

NAN had borne the separation from home and her people very well, but once on the train she could scarcely wait till the old brown house was reached. Long before the train neared her station, she closed her bag, closed her book, buttoned her jacket, and sat ready to leave the car. The station lay about a mile beyond the Wynkoop farm, and Nan flattened her nose against the window to get a glimpse of the thirty-acre lot, as the train skirted past it. The stone fence was bordered with wild cherry trees, whose fruit was already turning red. Nan smiled as she remembered the dresses she had torn and the shoes she had "scuffed" in climbing those trees. She could not see the house from the train, but she could get a glimpse of the barn, and she saw the cows coming down the road to be milked. "The dear home," she said to herself, and happy tears filled her eyes.

When the train stopped at her station her father was there, standing by the head of the old white horse. Nan smiled. Billy had long ago ceased to be able to run away. There were several people on the platform, whom Nan knew, but

she passed them without recognition, and rushed up to her father, throwing her arms around his neck.

"It seems good to see you, Nan, child," Mr. Wynkoop said, "and I declare you seem glad to see me. I didn't know but I might be too up-country for such a citified young lady. Stand still, Billy, will you? You look taller than you did last fall, but aren't you a little peaked?"

"I am thin, but I'll soon get back any flesh I have lost, now that I am home again." As she spoke Nan put her foot on the step of the old "Democrat" wagon.

"Wait a minute, Nannie. Mr. Bamford is here. He came with a fine rig from the livery to get you. I told him that it was all right, he could take you and I would take the trunk."

"He will do nothing of the kind. Who wants his fine rig? I'm going with you, of course. If he is anxious to take something he can take the trunk," said Nan, speaking with some temper.

"Ssh! There he comes. You haven't lost your spunk, I see." And Mr. Wynkoop looked as if he would have been sorry had Nan come home without it.

"Welcome home, Annice!" Mr. Bamford was going to take both Nan's hands, but he got a frigid shake from one. She was angry at his coming to meet her and escort her home in state. She knew that in Macedonia it would be equivalent to an

announcement of their engagement, and she could fancy the people looking from windows along the road and commenting upon them.

"You are looking better than when I saw you in New York last winter," Mr. Bamford remarked, as he and Nan stood together while Mr. Wynkoop was looking after her trunk. "Will there be room in the wagon for both you and your trunk? You would better let me drive you home?"

"Oh, yes, there is plenty of room, I couldn't think of letting you take so much trouble," Nan replied in a manner which would have caused Miss Henshawe to fall into hysterics.

The trunk was in the wagon at last, and Nan climbed in, assisted by the professor.

"Good evening, Mr. Bamford. Come in some time when you are passing, and I will show you my pictures."

"There! I am even with him for calling me Annice so that every one on the platform could hear it, and making such a show of coming after me," said Nan to herself.

"You were pretty hard on the teacher," said her father as they drove away. "Get up, Billy. Ma and the girls will be wondering where we are staying."

"He needs setting down." Nan referred to Mr. Bamford, not to Billy. "It isn't his place to meet me and drive me home. I've never given

him any reason to think he has any rights where I am concerned. I wouldn't be placed in a false position, and that is why I was so short with him."

Mr. Wynkoop turned and stared at the young woman by his side. Last summer she would not have spoken in this decided fashion. Then she made fun of the teacher and caricatured him, but he had supposed "it would make a match." He was surprised at this turn of affairs, but he was not disappointed. As he frequently told his wife, he didn't want any of his girls to marry unless they were sure they wanted to. One thing he knew, Nan had changed during the last year.

She had changed, and she knew it. If she had ever been in doubt about her feeling toward Mr. Bamford, she was no longer undecided. She respected him, and if he would have continued only a friend she would have liked him; but he could never be anything more. A face came up before her, and crowded out the thought of every other man. It was a face which was hard to read, and which wore a dozen different expressions in an hour, but it would always be the one face in the world to her. The last few days had wrought a great change in Nan. She was a woman now; she loved. It was an awful thing to confess to herself that she had given her heart where it had not been asked. It might mean a life of crushing sorrow, but Nan accepted it. Her life might be

bare and lonely, but it would be sweeter than if she had never had this experience. She would do her work in the world to the best of her ability. She would be a good woman, and no one should know that she had a story locked in her heart.

Nan kept going over this ground all the way home. Billy stopped occasionally to browse at the bushes along the roadside, so the journey took some time. Nan answered her father when he spoke, but her train of thought was not interrupted.

Charlotte met them at the top of the hill, and Nan got out of the wagon and walked with her the rest of the way. Charlotte was evidently very glad to see Nan, and she bore her no ill-will for going to New York. Emma Anna and her mother stood at the gate. Nan kissed Emma Anna first, but she wound her young arms about her mother's neck and kept them there, while they said words to each other which the others did not hear. Harriet was not there, and Nan missed her. It was the one thing lacking in her home-coming.

After bathing her face and brushing her hair in her own room, Nan went down to supper. Times might be hard with the Wynkoops, but the mother had furnished the equivalent to the fatted calf. Nan praised everything, and ate almost to her mother's satisfaction.

It seemed to Nan that everyone in the family looked thin and worried, especially her mother, and she asked if anything was wrong.

"Ma's been kind of peaked all spring," Mr. Wynkoop replied, "but she'll be all right now that she's got her baby back."

After supper Nan went out into the tangled old flower garden. Nothing changed there from year to year. The myrtle came up every spring and bordered the flower-beds; the purple fleur-de-lys bloomed by the back gate, and the old-fashioned pink roses put forth their sweetness every year, and the ribbon-grass did its best to crowd everything else out.

"It's all in a tangle," said her mother, who had come up behind her. "I'd have liked to clear it up before you came, but I couldn't seem to find the time."

"I wouldn't want it changed, mother. It looks just right to me. We'll work in it together and take out some weeds. I see you are going to have plenty of nasturtiums by-and-by. I love the dear, peppery things. Oh, I'm glad, glad, glad, that I'm going to be home so many weeks."

"I'm glad that you care for your home, Nannie. It's a plain place, but I have taken a great deal of comfort here."

The air was very sweet and fresh, and Nan was loath to return to the house. It had been

very hot in the city a few days before she left, and she had longed for the breeze from her own hills. She walked on to the barn, and then into the barn-yard, where her father was milking. Her mother went to the house and came back with a glass, so that Nan could have a drink of warm milk. "You will soon get the roses back in your cheeks if you drink milk enough," she said.

Nan drank the milk, then she and her mother strolled around the garden, looking at the vegetables, and talking over the happenings of the year. It began to grow dark, the stars came out one by one, and the noises of the night began to be heard; the bull-frogs peeped in a neighboring pond.

Emma Anna and Charlotte were reading by the sitting-room lamp when Nan went in, but they put their books aside

"I've had a splendid walk," and Nan sank down in the depths of the roomy old lounge. "I'm a regular country-girl, and I'm glad of it. When I get through studying I'm going to live where I can hear bull-frogs and see lovely shadows. I can't wait till morning, I want to do things. I feel very young to-night, and I want to do all the nice things I used to do. Is it too late to make a willow whistle? I want to make one, and sit on the big gate-post and toot on it and scare old Billy. I want to eat sassafras and birch and wintergreen berries,—anything Indian

and woodsy. I want to make a corn-stalk fiddle, and a wigwam out of the whole stooks of corn-stalks, and I want a pumpkin so I can make a jack-o'-lantern. I'm not sure of it that I don't want to make mud-pies. It's good to be home, and to be just Nan Wynkoop. I'm tired of being grown-up Miss Wynkoop. Do you think I'm crazy, mother?"

Mrs. Wynkoop leaned over from the Boston rocker and patted the girl's shoulder, and Mr. Wynkoop put aside the county paper, and listened to the "youngest," as she told of all the experiences of the last few months.

When the clock struck nine Mrs. Wynkoop sent Nan to bed. Charlotte came to her door and insisted on unpacking her trunk. This was almost too much for Nan; Charlotte had always been so dignified, and had treated Nan like a child. Charlotte handled Nan's canvases with much respect, and said she was anxious to see the pictures by daylight. When the trunk was empty she said good-night, but came back to add that she was glad that Nan was home.

Nan opened the little white bed, meaning to fall asleep at once. But instead she opened a portfolio, and took from it a parcel, carefully wrapped and sealed. On it was written: "May 12, 189—. Not to be opened for one year."

"I'll open it just this once, and seal it again," Nan said, apologizing to herself. "After to-night

I will be very good and put all this behind me."

It was a portrait, done from memory, but a very faithful likeness of the face which had haunted Nan on the drive home.

"I'm silly; I know I am silly; but he will never know, and it makes me very happy to have the picture. But I will put it away for a whole year, and I'll try to get over—this. I'll know by the time the year is over whether I can be cured or not."

Nan sealed the parcel and put it in the bottom of her trunk. I am afraid that she sat for a long time at the window when she should have been asleep. To sit in the moonlight and think is not the surest way to teach oneself to forget things which should be forgotten. But Nan was not a perfectly sensible young woman. The model young woman would never have painted the portrait in the sealed parcel.

Nan awoke in the morning with a sense of loss which surprised herself. Her dreams had been of painting great pictures, and of straying through long galleries lined with paintings. She awoke to find herself in her little green-and-white room, and to realize that toil must come before any triumph could be possible. She gave herself a mental shake, and she soon had her bearings.

The day was bright and sunny, and she felt her spirits quicken. It was good to be alive; work

was good for woman as well as for man. She was glad that so much hard toil lay ahead of her.

No one but Mrs. Wynkoop was downstairs, and she was making biscuits for breakfast. She was surprised to see Nan down so early, and anxiously inquired if she had slept well. Nan went through the rooms, opening windows, and letting in the sunshine. Emma Anna came down presently, and laid the table for breakfast, while Charlotte tied her head up in a gingham apron, and swept the sitting-room. The biscuits were done by the time Mr. Wynkoop had milked, and Nan went to call him to breakfast.

After the meal the family demanded the pictures, and Nan unpacked them and set them around the room. She felt that her people were disappointed. All the pictures were portraits, which seemed to surprise Mr. Wynkoop, and he asked if she had painted any scenery. Mrs. Wynkoop remarked that no doubt the pictures were well painted, but the models must have been very plain. She wished she had a landscape to hang in the parlor, and if Nan ever painted any fruit-pieces she would like one for the dining-room. Anna Raymond had a fruit-piece, with the most perfect pears and grapes, and she couldn't begin to paint as well as Nan.

Nan resolved that the first thing she painted would be a fruit-piece to hang in the parlor. She knew that she had made great improvement dur-

ing the year, yet she could understand the disappointment of her father and mother. Harriet would see the improvement, and Nan felt that she could not wait till she came.

She came in the afternoon, and Nan met her long before she reached home. They sat down by the roadside and talked till a shower came up and drove them home.

Nan took Harriet up to her little room, where she had shown her pictures on the day when she decided to go to New York. There were better pictures now, and Harriet was quick to see the change.

"Oh, Harriet, you are such a comfort to me. The others are disappointed; they expected pictures which they could show to the neighbors and hang in the parlor, and instead they are negro men and Italian boys and homely women, as I overheard mother saying to Emma Anna. I was so proud of the way I painted the skin of that colored man, and I got such a splendid criticism on it. The instructor held it up before the class and said it was excellent. I was as proud as a peacock, and all the girls were jealous. But I am sorry that mother is disappointed, and I wish I had painted some plaques with flowers for her to show to the neighbors."

"I understand you, and I understand father and mother," assented Harriet. "They are just a little proud of the daughter who has been study-

ing art in New York, and they want to show your work when people come in. Mother has been saying that she hoped you would paint a fruit-piece to hang in the dining-room."

"I wish you had told me."

"I wish I had, but I didn't suppose you would care so much about her disappointment."

"Harrie! Have I been so selfish?"

"No; but I knew you were absorbed in your work. You can paint something for mother now."

"I will, I'll paint a fruit-piece at once. There is nothing to paint yet but cherries, but I'll do peaches and grapes later. I'll do a great big picture, and she shall have any kind of fruit that grows if she likes. Dear mother! Harriet, have you noticed how worried they all look?"

"No; I have seen no change. Perhaps I wouldn't notice it, for I see them every week. No one is ill, but they all are more or less poorly, as father says. Every one of us would look and feel better if our prospects were brighter."

"It would encourage them if I took the Pine Ridge school, I know."

"No, Nannie; that needn't be. It is an unnecessary sacrifice. You must go back to New York. I have set my heart on that. You are the only one in the family who has any talent, and we must not tie your hands. It's an awful thing to want to express oneself and not to be able, to have something crying out within one to be said

and done, and to have no way to say or do it. I have felt that for ten years, but I can't write or paint or make a statue. I have the creative instinct, and no means of expressing myself. You have both, and you shall learn to express yourself. It shall be my one luxury to help you do this. I have been corresponding with Miss Frost, and I am satisfied that any money I invest in you will bring me a good rate of interest. I stood back this year and left you to help yourself, because I wanted to see if you loved your art enough to suffer for it. I think you do. So you must go back. We shall do very well here at home, and you must not worry. Perhaps, by and by, you may be able to help us more than you could now, and with much less sacrifice to yourself. So rest this summer and get all your strength back, so you will be ready for next year's work."

"Harriet, you are the soul of generosity. I'll go back very gladly, but I can't let you pay all my expenses. I can do a great deal for myself, and I shall let you make up what I lack. Even that seems too much to take. You have nothing in your life but hard work, and you should use your money to bring some brightness to yourself."

"I'll have the brightness when you are a successful artist. I talk this over with you at once, for I want you to have your mind at rest. You look tired, and I hope you'll do nothing but live

out of doors and be lazy till you are sure you are entirely rested. I'm glad to have you at home once more, pussy;" and Harriet kissed Nan good-night in a shamefaced way. The Wynkoop family had a terror of any demonstration.

Nan began the "fruit-piece" at once, and it was soon hanging on the dining-room wall. This, with two "flower-pieces," which she presented to Emma Anna and Charlotte, were exhibited to the neighbors by her family as the fruit of her winter's work in New York.

These visits of the neighbors were a great trial to Nan. They presumed that of course she would stay at home and teach. Several girls wished to take painting lessons, and no doubt she could "get up" a class. Harriet gave out at once that Nan was going back to New York in September, and everybody wondered how Harriet could afford it. It was understood that Nan must have used all of her Aunt Annice's money, "board was so high in New York, and paints cost considerable."

The paintings of fruit and flowers were very much admired, and, to Nan's surprise, she had several orders for similar pictures. This work brought her quite a little revenue, which she hoarded up toward next year's expenses. She could paint a picture in a little while, and she worked at fruit and flowers when she was in no mood to do what she called legitimate painting.

CHAPTER XV.

NAN had been at home several days before Mr. Bamford called. He met her with a somewhat constrained manner, and he seemed ill at ease. Nan was sorry that she had been so short to him on the day of her return, and she tried to make amends by being very pleasant now. Naturally, she talked of her winter's work, and when Mr. Bamford asked to see her pictures she brought some of them down.

"Don't you think I have improved? I am not asking this because I am vain, but I have worked very hard, and I hope there is improvement. You are not like the neighbors around here, who call a spray of golden rod on a panel of red plush a work of art."

"There is no doubt that there is much improvement. You are all artist. As for me, I am only a man, and I can't find it in my heart to be glad. I thought perhaps this year would prove to you that you had no particular talent for painting, and you would be willing to come home and be a woman instead of an artist. The world needs more women; it can do very well without artists. I hoped—I must own that I hoped—

you would not succeed. But you have, and your art is all in all to you. I can see it in your eyes. You are changed, and I love you better than ever, Annice."

"Don't, Mr. Bamford, please don't talk in this way. Let us be friends as we used to be. When you look so distressed I feel that I have wronged you. And yet, I can't see how I have done anything wrong. Last spring, when I first began to be sure that you were fond of me, I tried to show you that I did not return your feeling."

"You are not to blame, Annice. You need not be pained because of anything you have done. Perhaps I have hurt my own cause by pressing my suit too soon. If I had waited——"

"It would not have made any difference," said Nan, speaking kindly, but firmly. "I am sorry, but this is the truth. Really, Mr. Bamford, you think too much of me. You are worthy of a better wife than I could make."

"I suppose I must give you up. I felt the moment I saw you that I had lost ground. You were not so sure of your feelings when I saw you last winter, were you?"

"No; I was not so sure."

"I knew it. Some one has come between us. Is it that long-haired artist I met in the museum?"

Nan froze instantly. "That long-haired artist.

Nan was getting very tired of this. She moved over to the window, and drew in a branch of the Japanese honeysuckle, burying her face in its sweetness. She walked over to the old piano, and played a few tinkling notes as her hands dropped on the yellow keys. Mr. Bamford sat bolt-upright on the horsehair sofa, and, as he showed no sign of departing, Nan essayed to introduce a new topic of conversation.

But it was of no avail. Whether she talked of the magazine club, or the church choir, or the new assistant who was to be in the high school in the fall, Mr. Bamford answered only in monosyllables. Harriet came downstairs, and Nan made such a peremptory sign to her through the open door, that she came in.

Mr. Bamford unbent, and deigned to enter into conversation. He gave Harriet a valuable list of books on sociology for the library committee to consider, and he discoursed cheerfully upon the prospects of a new organ in the church. The evening ended by duets between Harriet and Mr. Bamford. Nan did not sing, but she sat and wove quite a little romance about Harriet and the teacher. It would be a most sensible match, for he was much nearer Harriet's age than her own.

She suggested this to Harriet after Mr. Bamford had gone. The two girls strolled out to the hay field and sat down in the fragrant hay. Har-

riet laughed as if the idea were ridiculous, and settled herself comfortably in the hay.

"Why not, Harrie? He is really very nice, and he would make a good husband."

"Marry him yourself, Nan. You have the opportunity, and I haven't. Not that I want it," she added.

"It would be an excellent match," Nan went on. "He really is too good for me, and that makes him almost good enough for you. I think he would make an acceptable brother-in-law."

"Really, Nan, you are too kind and generous. I know he would be ever so much obliged to you if he knew your plans."

"He might well be. You know a great deal more than I do. You play and sing, and I scarcely know one tune from another. I would advise you to be nice to him, Harrie."

"Are you going to keep on with that idea? I might get enough of it after an hour or two. See if that will extinguish you." And Harriet got up and covered Nan with an armful of hay.

"Thank you, Harriet. It is very sweet. Oh, what wouldn't some of those poor girls in New York give for the chance of being in a hay field on a July evening, watching the dearest little moon in the world rise over the tops of the trees."

"Be careful, or you'll paint a landscape this time."

Nan laughed, and brushed the hay away. "It's

glorious out here. Why didn't we bring Emma Anna and Charlotte?"

"They wouldn't come. They think, if they know where we are, that we are wasting our time."

"Yes, of course. I can imagine what they are doing. Charlotte is reading something improving and wooden, like Gibbon's Rome. She was half way through when I came home. Emma Anna is knitting on that very florid afghan and reading the *Delineator* at the same time. Mother probably sits in the Boston rocker too tired to do more than sigh, 'Dear me.' Father, it is safe to say, sits in the back door; he is the most sensible one of the lot. Why don't they all go and sit in the porch, since they won't come down to the hay field. How do you like that?" and Nan buried Harriet in the fragrant hay.

"It's absolutely blissful. I shall be asleep in two moments if you don't talk to me."

"What shall I talk about, the professor?"

"No. Nannie, have you a beau in New York? That is the proper word according to the Macedonian dictionary."

"No, I haven't. Why?"

"Oh, I was just wondering. I heard Emma Anna and Charlotte discussing the possibility. Their reasons were that the professor had not been here much, and you received letters in 'big handwriting' from New York."

"The big handwriting is Clara Henshaw's. No, there is no beau. Probably the postmaster's daughter has been wondering. I told Clara how curious she was, and it amused her very much. So now she sends me two postal cards every week, written in French. On the last one she suggested that I loan the postmaster's daughter a French dictionary. You'd find Clara very amusing, Harriet."

"She is coming, isn't she?" asked Harriet sleepily.

"Yes; in August. I can imagine how she will affect Emma Anna and Charlotte; but she isn't such a goose as she seems on first acquaintance. Are you asleep?"

"Almost. I suppose we ought to go in. Charlotte must have read twenty pages of Gibbon, and Emma Anna has made a green and purple and rose-colored square for the afghan. They are probably waiting for us to come in so they can lock up the house. It's a shame to go in, for it is only ten."

"Poor things! I wish they could get more out of life," said Nan. "I've lost every hairpin but one. Some cow will find them in her hay next winter."

Harriet and Nan stopped at the well for a drink. Nan let the bucket down to the bottom of the well, and when the water came up it was cold as if it had been iced. "It's better than soda from

the corner drugstore," said Nan appreciatively. "I'll get a pitcher and take some in. Father always finishes up with a visit to the well, and I'll save him the trouble."

As Harriet said, the afghan and Gibbon were put away, and Emma Anna was locking the front door and the parlor windows, while Charlotte wound the clocks. Mrs. Wynkoop had gone up-stairs, tired with jelly-making and ironing.

"Didn't you get cold sitting out in the hay field?" asked Emma Anna of Nan.

"No; it was delightful out there. You should have come with us. I don't see why you stay in the house so much. I despise a house in summer. You work too hard, Emma Anna. Don't you ever take a play-spell?"

"Why, yes, Nan. I never work evenings, unless I am very much rushed. I rest working on my afghan."

"Oh," said Nan. "I suppose the afghan is to her the same as a picture is to me," she said, going into Harriet's room. "I don't see how any one who has Emma Anna's taste about dressmaking can concoct such a piece of villainy as that afghan. What will she do with it when it is done?"

"Put it over the parlor sofa, I suppose," said Harriet wickedly. "It's shabby enough to need it."

"That parlor is dreadful, Harrie. I'm an ungrateful wretch to say anything, but it drives me

almost to desperation. It always did, but it looks even worse than ever. What did mother buy that horse-hair furniture *for* ?”

“I don't know. It was very fine when she got it, I dare say. I know it's dreadful, Nan. It doesn't need the artist's eye to see that. But we can't do anything about it. We simply can't afford anything new, and if we could I wouldn't break mother's heart by telling her that this isn't perfectly desirable.”

“No, I wouldn't either. I hadn't thought of it from her point of view. But to sit in that room with its horse-hair furniture and hideous carpet and marble-topped table, and hear Mr. Bamford discourse on woman's sphere, is ‘worse than seven times eight and seven times seven.’”

“What is that?” said Harriet, letting down a quantity of black hair.

“Why, don't you know Marjorie Fleming? She said that ‘the most Devilish thing is seven times seven and eight times eight. It is what nature itself can't endure.’ Clara is always saying it, and I know she will want to say it when she sees our parlor. I can fancy her standing before those two vases and letting her vocabulary run away with her. Of course she can't say anything while she is here, but she will suffer all the more. I'll keep her in the sitting-room when we are in the house.”

“The parlor never seems to strike the pro-

fessor unpleasantly. I suppose he would cheerfully sit there every evening if you would let him."

"There you go, harking back to the professor again. You are determined to have him in the family, I see. Marry him yoursel', lassie."

"All joking aside, Nan, I really wonder if you are very sure that you are not making a mistake. He is a good man, and his like is not met every day."

"I am very sure, oh, prudent Harriet. Seriously, I am very sure that I know I am not making a mistake, and I know why I am sure. Does that satisfy you?"

"It ought to, surely. I'll drop the matter, Nan. I think you know your own mind."

CHAPTER XVI.

NAN found difficulty in getting suitable models for her work. Her own family was too busy to sit for her, and she felt that the neighbors thought her portraits of little importance compared to her pictures of roses and hollyhocks. Occasionally she borrowed a child long enough to get a satisfactory portrait, but children were shy of the little attic studio. Nan had always been a favorite with small folk, but her year in New York, and the fact that she had pictures of "darkies and Eytalians," invested her with a sort of mystery and dread.

Grandma Wynkoop came early in July, and Nan immediately decided that here was a model to be thankful for. Grandma called the whole affair "fol-de-rol," and said she would rather have a good photograph any day than a "smelly" oil-painting. Still, she agreed to sit to Nan. If she would spend money on such things, she oughtn't to lose what she had learned. So, every morning the old lady climbed to the studio and let Nan pose her. At first, they disagreed about the dress. Nan wanted to drape her in a black lace shawl, and arrange her hair in puffs at the

temples. But Grandma insisted on being "taken" in her new silk dress, and she also insisted on wearing her false front. Nan was in despair. She abominated the new silk dress. Grandma had a gay eye, and her dress was of purple, with black polka dots. The false front, which was her especial pride, and which she had "just paid five dollars for," transformed the really handsome old lady, giving her a vicious expression. "Grandma," pleaded poor Nan, "you are so much handsomer in black lace and with your own white hair. Let me paint you as you are, not as that false front makes you look."

But the old lady was firm. She would be taken as she wished to be taken, or not at all. She didn't care to set up-garret like a wooden image, anyway. A photograph was a good deal quicker, and no doubt it would be a sight more like her.

Nan began to weaken. Models were scarcer than ever, and grandma must be held at any price. So she effected a compromise with the old lady. She would paint one picture, just as she wished, polka dot silk and all, if grandma would let her paint her a second time draped in the lace mantle, and wearing her own hair, and an ancestral tortoise-shell comb. Mrs. Wynkoop yielded after Nan had solemnly promised that she would never show the second picture to anyone in Macedonia.

This settled, Nan began work in earnest. But it was not all smooth sailing, by any means. She would get grandma posed just as she wanted her, when she would jump up and fly to the window, or insist that she must go downstairs and get a drink. Nan would implore her to let her go for the water, but then the old lady would invent some other excuse to get back to the sitting-room, where Emma Anna sat sewing. She liked to know just what everybody in the town had to wear, and she always enjoyed being with Emma Anna.

Nan found that the best way to keep her quiet was to talk to her, so she spun long yarns about her life in New York and the people she had met. These narratives did not proceed very rapidly, for grandma always insisted upon knowing the history of every person Nan mentioned. "What are his or her circumstances?" was the first question. There was much similarity about the circumstances of Nan's friends, for they were all self-supporting women, and grandma remarked that New York must be full of women trying to do men's work.

Grandma did not hold with the "new woman," if there is such a person, and she was orthodox and conservative enough in her views to delight even Mr. Bamford. She had as little regard for a man who did a woman's work as for a masculine woman, and she asked a great many ques-

tions about men who made pictures for their living. When Nan first mentioned Mr. Parrish's name she inquired if he was a beau of hers. Nan promptly repudiated such an idea, and then grandma turned her head, spoiling the pose, to ask if Nan had a beau in New York.

"No," said Nan, laughing. "Grandma, things are different from what they were when you were young. Young men and young women work and have good times together, and they don't think of falling in love."

"Humph! I know they are a flirtatious lot!"

"No, it is not flirting; it's——" Nan was going to say *camaraderie*, but she remembered that grandma wouldn't understand it, so she substituted friendliness.

"Fiddlesticks!" said the old lady. "That's what I call it. The world will be full of old maids and old bachelors if this friendliness keeps on."

Nan posed her again and went on painting, leaving her with the last word.

"Annice, are you going to marry that school teacher?"

"No, grandma."

"Why not?"

"Because I don't want to. I don't care enough about him to marry him. How would you have liked to marry some man you didn't love instead of grandpa?"

"I didn't stop and weigh matters; no one did in them days. We got married as a matter of course. Jonas Wynkoop—your father is named for him—came a-courting me. He was well-to-do and good-looking, and he sang bass in the choir. I was twenty, and lots of girls married before that age, and I took him. We always got along first-rate together, Jonas and I, and I wasn't stopping to think whether we were congenial or not. We were too busy, I with my housework and Jonas with his farm. We worked and saved and made money and raised six children. All of them did well except your pa; he don't seem to have any faculty, and he don't take that after me nor your grandpa. Well, Jonas has been dead these thirteen years, and here I am, as lively as I was ten years ago, and having my picture took. How are you getting along, Annice?"

"Nicely; just sit still five minutes longer, and I'll give you a rest."

Grandma was never satisfied with the picture. It was too faithful to suit her. As she said, she might as well look in the glass if Nan was going to paint her just as she was, and she insisted that Nan hadn't made the false front "crimpy" enough. Nan promised to mend that fault, and while the old lady stood there she painted out a wrinkle or two, whereat grandma went back to her pose.

"You'll make a right smart painter some day, Annice, if you keep on. I shouldn't wonder if you'd get as much as twenty-five dollars for a picture by and by."

Nan told some prices which "men who painted pictures for a living" got for their portraits.

"For the land's sake! It must pay them better than doing men's work. I suppose that is why they stick to it. I don't suppose women ever make very much for their pictures; they never get so well paid as men. It ain't in the nature of things."

"Why not, grandma?" asked Nan.

"Because it ain't, child. It ain't to be expected."

"But, grandma, suppose women's work is equally good."

"It don't matter. Women's women and men's men. You can't change what has always been." And Nan got no elucidation of this much-vexed question of equal pay for equal labor.

"If you'll marry the school teacher, I'll give you a plush parlor set when you go to house-keeping." Grandma spoke as if this offer would clinch the bargain.

Nan laughed, much to the old lady's indignation. "You'll see the time when you'll be glad to have such a parlor set as that would be."

"I never expect to have a parlor to put one in."

"No parlor? Oh, I suppose you'll have one of those studio rooms I've read about in books, full of old tin pans and trumpery, old furniture and fol-de-rol. I'd be self-respecting enough to say I'd have a parlor, even if I didn't see where it was coming from. Your ma ain't got much get-up about her, but she's got a proper parlor."

Nan often wished for Miss Henshawe to share the fun. It took the mornings of two weeks to complete the picture, and Nan found her grandmother most piquant company. The old lady had most decided views upon all subjects, and she announced them with much conviction. Sometimes they almost fell out, and grandma would go downstairs and stay so long that Nan would coax her back by a promise to make the cheeks redder or to paint out another line in the face.

At last the picture was done, and Nan carried it down to her grandmother's room. She surveyed it critically, said the dress looked as if it were real silk, and that no doubt Nan had done her best, considering how far she had gone, but that, except for the dress and the breast-pin, she would never have known who it was if she hadn't sat for it.

"I'm sorry you are not pleased, grandma, and I am sure the next picture will be better. You know I am to paint your lovely hair. You know you promised."

"Yes, child, I know. But I can't go through all that again right away. I'll make my visit at your Uncle David's, and I'll come back in August and finish out my visit here. Then you can take me looking as old as you please, only you mustn't ever show it hereabouts."

"Miss Henshawe will be here then, and we'll have real good times together. You'll like her."

"I don't know whether I'll like her or not, but I am curious to see some more of these painting people. I'd like to see some of those men who get such big prices for their pictures."

When Nan went to her grandmother's room to say good-night, she called her in and told her to draw the shades. Nan obeyed, and the old lady opened her trunk and took out a box marked "Prepared Mustard Plasters."

"What is the matter, grandma? Are you ill? Why don't you let mother make a mustard plaster? Hers are better than prepared ones."

"Who said anything about mustard plasters? I'm after my money. I keep it between these layers of mustard plasters, and I'd like to see the burglar who would think of looking here for it. There are two ten-dollar bills and one five; that makes twenty-five dollars. It's all for painting my portrait. When you get rich from your pictures remember that your grandmother paid you the first money you ever got for painting a portrait."

"It is too much," Nan began.

"No; it ain't. You worked hard enough, I guess you earned it. Do what you please with the money. I hope you'll have lots more of it from your pictures. I'd rather see you marry than be a painter, but I suppose I'm old-fashioned. You seem to have lots of push and spirit, and I'm glad of it. I shouldn't wonder if you take it after me. Maybe I'd be painting pictures and writing books if I had to live in this age. There, child, don't thank me. You are welcome. If you hadn't been you wouldn't have got the money."

Nan put the money with the little hoard she was saving toward next year's expenses. This was a great increase, and it was none the less welcome because unexpected.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE middle of August brought Miss Henshawe. She had spent the summer at her old home in Maine, and she had left Miss Minerva there, pottering among her flower-beds as happy as a queen.

Nan drove old Billy to the station to meet Miss Henshawe. "Isn't it lovely! so peaceful and restful," was her first exclamation. "Do you know, I think I shall *grow* here, grow artistically I mean. The surroundings are favorable for growth, don't you think?"

"I think they are favorable for standing still artistically," said Nan, chirruping to Billy, who showed his usual indisposition to move. "I hope you have come prepared to be sensible, Clara Henshawe. I don't like the way you are starting out."

Miss Henshawe laughed good-naturedly. "I'll get over this. But really, it's a dear, delightful old place. I feel rested already. Hills always rest me."

"I don't like them. I'd give all the Catskills sometimes for a whiff from the sea. I sit here and dream of salt water till I can smell it, almost.

Hold the horse, will you, while I go into the post-office."

"What a lot of people! What is going on?"

"Nothing. They always congregate at the post-office. Some people get a letter now and then, and the others come to see if anyone else gets letters."

"O, there is Mr. Bamford."

Miss Henshawe's voice was pitched so high that Mr. Bamford heard her, and he came up to the buggy and shook hands. When Nan came back with the mail they were chatting as if they were the best of friends. Nan took the reins, but Miss Henshawe was in the midst of a description of her summer, and of course Nan had to wait till she came to a full stop.

"I suppose I shall see you often while I am with Annice," said Miss Henshawe cordially, when at last, they drove away.

"I shall be very happy to call soon," and Mr. Bamford went back into the post-office, feeling very well satisfied with himself. It was something to be appreciated, even if by the wrong woman. Nan had looked particularly attractive that afternoon in a broad-brimmed hat and a dainty blue muslin. Mr. Bamford could almost imagine her a womanly woman with no thought of a "sphere."

"You seem to have letters," remarked Miss Henshawe.

"Yes; one from Paris, from Miss Frost. The post-master's daughter hated to let it go so soon. Poor girl, it was inconsiderate of me to call for the mail as soon as it was in."

"What is in this parcel? That has a 'furrin' look too. Open it, do."

Nan did. It proved to be a sketch—a bit of the Bois de Boulogne, and it was signed "T. B. F."

"Teddy Frost. Oh, the darling, that he is! I'd give all my back hair to have him send me something, and you take it as a matter of course. What is this on the back? 'In memory of our day at the Bronx.' I declare, this is very sentimental. I feel it my duty to tell Mr. Bamford all about this."

"My dear Clara, this, as you are pleased to call it, is none of Mr. Bamford's business, to speak plainly. We may as well understand this at once."

Miss Henshawe gave a little whistle. "Did I put my foot in it when I asked him to call?"

"No; he calls now and then, enough to keep up appearances, but he and I understand each other."

"Nan, I'll wager sixteen tubes of paint that you liked him before you met—"

Miss Wynkoop's hand was placed gently but firmly over her friend's mouth. "Don't you dare, on your life, finish that sentence. If you attempt

to I'll drive Billy over the stone wall and do my best to break your neck. That is our house just ahead."

"I'll never say anything again, unless I ask you first if it is proper. There is your grandmother sitting on the porch."

"Yes; and she has dressed up in your honor. When I left she had on a nice-looking lawn wrapper, and her own hair, and now she has on all her war-paint, and looks hideous. Wait till I show you her to-morrow without that false front, before you form any opinion of her."

"I must say she doesn't look like your grandmother, that is all. It's very pretty here, Nan, and the house looks comfy and homelike. I am anxious to see your little green-and-white room."

A few moments later Miss Henshawe stood within it, getting rid of the dust of travel.

"It's like you, Nan. Now I want to see the little attic studio, but I'll wait till morning for that. I mustn't have everything in one day. What a glorious sunset you have from your little window. I shall be very happy here." And Miss Henshawe kissed Nan impulsively.

Miss Henshawe had wondered whether the Wynkoop family would not be somewhat "put out" at having a guest from the city. But she soon saw that they were perfectly at ease. They met her cordially, but there was nothing to indicate

that they felt any embarrassment. Only grandma had made an effort to "dress up." Mrs. Wynkoop, Emma Anna, and Charlotte, wore muslin dresses.

Grandma immediately inquired after the health of Miss Minerva. After being assured that she was well and happy, the old lady started out on a genealogical excursion.

"Are you any relation of Silas Henshawe?"

"I don't know. I never heard of him. Who was he?"

"He was the son of Pelatiah Henshawe, and *his* father was Obadiah Henshawe. They came from Maine way, and most probably you all are related. They were the only family of Henshawes I ever knew, and Silas, he died in States prison. He forged."

Miss Henshawe choked behind her napkin, and Nan's eyes were dancing.

"How—unfortunate if Silas was a relative of mine," said Miss Henshawe. "I'll ask Minerva if she knows anything of the family history."

"Silas Henshawe didn't look unlike you," persisted grandma, "and now that I think of it, you have the same nose."

"Silas must have been an artist in his line, and that is another point of resemblance," said Nan, mischievously.

"No; he wasn't an artist, he was a stonemason, and he'd a done better if he'd stuck to his trade

and let forging alone. Some of his family didn't know enough to read, let alone writin', and it would have been better for Silas if he'd had no schooling. No, no; he wasn't an artist; people didn't make pictures and call it work, in those days."

"Isn't your grandmother a treat?" said Miss Henshawe, when she and Nan went out on the porch after supper. "She is as good as a play. She told me about the picture you painted of her, while you were out of the room a moment before supper."

"Yes; I did a dreadful one to please her, but I'm going to do a good one to please myself. I depend upon you to keep grandma quiet while I paint."

After the farm had been thoroughly explored by Miss Henshawe on the morning after her arrival, she turned her attention to the studio and examined everything Nan had done since she began to paint. Grandma heard their voices, and came up to inquire if they wanted her to sit for her picture.

"Yes, yes; we'll take her while she is willing, it is so seldom that she is," said Nan. "I have a canvas ready."

So grandma sat down, and Miss Henshawe draped her shoulders in the blacklace mantle, and posed her. Nan began to draw at once, and by dinner time she had made satisfactory progress.

Miss Henshawe talked, and worked on some embroidery, thus keeping grandma quiet.

After a day or two Nan became absorbed in her picture. "It is going to be the best thing I ever did," she said to Miss Henshawe, who fully agreed with her.

Grandma sniffed contemptuously when she looked at it, and said it was even worse than the first one. She asked Miss Henshawe why she did not take her picture. She had taken a great fancy to Miss Henshawe, and she followed her about the house. She felt acquainted with her at once, because she had known Silas, and Miss Henshawe's nose was like his.

"Miss Henshawe, or Clara, is a nice girl. She said I was to call her Clara," said Grandma to Nan one morning as they sat shelling peas in the kitchen. "I wonder why she never got married?"

"I'm sure I don't know, but there is time enough yet."

"I don't know about that ; she must be twenty-five, and when I was young a girl well-nigh gave up hope at twenty-five."

"Gave up hope of what, grandma?"

"Why, of getting married, of course. That's what we were talking about. Is she going to marry that Parrish man she talks about so often?"

"Mercy, no. They are only good friends."

"Humph! Where is Clara? I thought she was talking to the teacher out on the steps."

"She was, and no doubt she is talking to him now. They have gone driving."

"Just as like as not that will make a match, and you might have had him as well as not. Perhaps he's going with Clara just to give you a lesson."

"Oh, Grandma Wynkoop, don't be such a matchmaker. He probably takes her driving because he wants to. Now the peas are done, and it's time to paint. Let's go up-stairs."

"Let's wait till Clara comes."

"Why? I can't lose this morning. You'll think more of Clara than you do of me, if you are not careful, and I shall be jealous."

"I guess not. I guess if you are not jealous about the teacher you won't be about your old grandmother. Did Mr. Bamford ask you to go riding with him this morning?"

"No; he did not. He hasn't asked me to drive with him this summer, and he won't ask me, and I'm glad of it. I'll give him and Clara my blessing and dance at their wedding. Don't move, grandma, and I'll let you rest in five minutes."

Miss Henshawe came after a while. She stopped to look over Nan's shoulder. "Good! Grandma, you mustn't be vain, but you are a handsome old lady. Nan will get praise for this picture."

"Did you have a nice ride?" asked grandma sententiously.

"Yes; thank you. The natives stared as if they thought I had a beau. I believe that is the correct word, Nan. I almost know what they said when we had passed. 'I declare, the teacher is waiting on that artist woman from New York.' 'Waiting on,' is the proper expression, isn't it, Nan, or is it 'going with'?"

"Both are correct," said Nan, mixing more paint. "They are synonyms."

"I thought so. As I saw the neighbors were looking, I was very much absorbed in the teacher, and looked at him as if I thought he was good enough to eat. I hope he liked it."

"I think he did. He appreciates any one who appreciates him."

"Poor man. He really is very nice, and we are going to the 'doings' at the Methodist church. What is it, a lawn party?"

"It's an ice-cream festival," said grandma, "and Harriet, she said she'd take me. You going, Nan?"

Nan shook her head. "I don't know, grandma. If Harriet doesn't get home in time to take you, I'll go. I'm glad you are going, Clara; it will give you an excellent chance to see Macedonia and its suburbs."

Nan was especially glad that Clara was going to the festival with Mr. Bamford. That would convince the Macedonians once and forever that the teacher was not waiting on "the youngest

Wynkoop girl." Of course there would be people who would say that "she couldn't get the teacher," but she was quite willing to leave them to their own opinion. She was going back to New York, and she could afford to let the neighbors theorize about her.

Miss Henshawe's two weeks lengthened to four, and when at last she went to New York, it was to settle a place to live and work in during the next year. Her household goods had been in storage during the summer. She and Nan and Harriet had talked ways and means, and Miss Minerva had written numberless pages on the same subject. It was settled at last that the Henshawes should take a larger apartment, and that Nan should be with them. Miss Henshawe had dwelt on the desirability of Nan's living with some one staid and elderly like Miss Minerva, who, as she explained to Mrs. Wynkoop, was not one bit like her. Harriet said that she would never consent to having Nan spend another year in that boarding-house, and she heartily fell in with Miss Henshawe's plan.

Nan drove that young woman to the station one day early in September, and saw her on the train which was to bear her back to New York. Mr. Bamford was there to say good-by, and Miss Henshawe invited him to New York. "I'll give you a better luncheon this time," she said, as the car moved away, "and Mr. Parrish shall not

dress the salad." She kissed her hand to Nan, and was soon out of sight.

Nan and Mr. Bamford walked together over to the post-office; then he helped her into the buggy and handed her the reins with his most courtly bow.

"When do you go?" he asked.

"In about two weeks, if Miss Henshawe finds a place for us all. We are to be together, you know. It will be much pleasanter for me."

"Your mother used to worry over you a great deal last winter."

"I am sorry to hear it. I was safe and happy; there was no need for her to worry."

"I suppose you will paint a great picture this year."

Nan laughed and flicked a fly off old Billy's ears with her whip. "I don't expect to paint a great picture, but I hope to find myself much further along toward painting a great picture than I am now. Art is long, you know, Mr. Bamford."

"So I have always heard. Good-afternoon, Miss Annice. I shall be up to see you before you go."

"Good afternoon. I shall expect you."

"Come on, Macduff," she said when she got out of hearing. "Your visits cannot worry me now; I'm beyond them. Your views on the woman question can't keep me from painting a

very good portrait of Grandma Wynkoop. I'm not vain, I hope, but I would like to hear what a certain somebody would say about that picture. There, Billy, take your time. You shall stop and eat grass to your heart's content."

Nan let the reins lie loosely in her lap, and Billy jogged along at a snail's-pace. The girl in the wagon was enjoying herself to the utmost. It was good to be alive and beneath the open sky on a day like this. It was good to feel the young blood in her veins and the desire to work.

"I'm glad I'm Nan Wynkoop and no one else, Billy. It may seem very foolish of me to say this, but you can never tell. I'm full of life and full of hope. I'm happy. I'm going back to New York to work another year. I have no dread of anything, not even of Mr. Bamford's parting call. See how emancipated I am, Billy?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

GOING to New York the second time was a much easier matter than it had been a year before. As she sat in the train which was fast carrying her from Macedonia, Nan wondered how she had mustered up the courage to start when she had so little money, no friends, and no experience. True, money was even scarcer than it was a year ago, but she had a number of warm friends, and she had much encouragement that her work was full of promise. The hardest part of the battle was won, she told herself. She knew her ground, and she could work with less waste of nervous force. Besides, her surroundings were to be more pleasant than they were last year. She would be happy with Miss Minerva and Clara.

Miss Henshawe and Mr. Parrish met Nan, and that gentleman relieved her of her bag, looked after her trunk, and they all drove home together in great style, though Miss Henshawe advised him to save his money and patronize the "elevated."

"After all this gallantry I can't do less than ask you to stay to dinner, Basil," Miss Henshawe

said when they reached her door. "Nan, he is simply wild with jealousy over my studio. He came in night before last and gnashed his teeth so that Minerva heard him 'way out in the kitchen. For we have a kitchen this year, Nan, and Minerva is happy. So am I now that you are here," and having reached the studio by this time, Miss Henshawe grabbed Nan by the waist, and danced a fantastic dance.

"There, look about you, and tell me if I haven't done well," she said, when at last she released her.

"Wait till I go and see Miss Minerva," and Nan ran to the door to meet her.

Miss Minerva received her with open arms, and at once carried her off to look at her kitchen. "I am prouder of it than Clara is of her studio, and why not, when it is my studio. It is most important that Clara should have proper food, but it was hard to cook it on a little gas-stove. See this cupboard, and this, and see what a nice range I have. Oh, I shall take good care of you girls this winter."

When Nan went back to the studio Mr. Parrish was examining an old cabinet which Miss Henshawe had picked up at a bargain. He maintained that the shape was good, but that it was not real mahogany, while she as stoutly insisted that it was.

Miss Minerva announced dinner, and hostilities

ceased for a while. It was a nice little dinner, and daintily served. Nan thought of the myriads of women at the boarding-house, and was properly thankful for her mercies.

"Did you work this summer, Miss Wynkoop?" Mr. Parrish asked abruptly, when he had drank his soup.

Miss Henshawe answered for her. "You would think she worked if you could see the picture she painted of Grandma Wynkoop. It's far and away the best work she ever did."

"What's the matter with my seeing it? It's here, isn't it, or will it be when the baggage comes? Don't ask me to carve, Clara. Really, I am very nervous this evening."

"I didn't mean to ask you. Thank goodness, I know how to carve. I'm as proud as a peacock of that picture of grandma."

"And she did it all by herself, too, didn't she?"

"Of course she did. I shall hang it up in the studio, and Nan can't help herself, for I am her natural guardian now."

"I'm going to stay till the expressman comes, and unpack that picture. Oh, by the way, the great, the only Theodore Frost is in town."

Miss Henshawe dropped her fork. "How do you know? And, Basil, I don't know what you mean by speaking of him in that manner."

Mr. Parrish ignored the reproof. "I know he is in town, for I saw his name among the arrivals

on the Majestic yesterday; and, moreover, I met him to-day exactly in front of the Hoffman House, to be accurate. I told him that you were back here, and that Miss Wynkoop would be here to-day."

"Is Miss Frost here, too?" asked Nan, who had not spoken for some time.

"Yes; so he said. I believe you love her almost as much as Miss Henshawe loves Teddy."

"I wish you wouldn't be so spiteful, Basil. It will never make you paint one half as well as Mr. Frost. There is the bell. No; Minerva, I'll go. Perhaps it is the expressman."

It was the expressman, and as soon as dinner was over Miss Henshawe made Nan take out the portrait. "We'll have our coffee in the studio, after we have the picture," she said.

"It's mighty well done, and no mistake," said Mr. Parrish cordially. "I congratulate you, Miss Wynkoop."

"Oh, she has it in her," quoted Miss Henshawe, with a wicked look at Nan. "There is another ring. Now I wonder who is coming, and we have these coffee cups around."

She opened the door to admit Miss and Mr. Frost. "Why, I declare, I am so surprised, and so glad. Yes; Miss Frost, Nan is here."

"My dear child, I'm so glad you came back to us," and Miss Frost kissed the girl on both cheeks.

"When you are through with Miss Wynkoop,

Jessica, I should like to shake hands with her; that is, if there is anything left of her.

"I'm awfully glad they didn't keep you up in Macedonia, Miss Wynkoop. I need not ask you if you rested, for I can see that you did, but I think you did some work as well. May I look at this 'portrait of an old lady'?"

Miss Henshawe immediately constituted herself show-woman. "It is Grandma Wynkoop, and I tell Nan it is the best thing she ever did."

Mr. Frost seemed to pay no attention to Miss Henshawe's remarks. "Come here, Jessica," he said. They stood for a moment looking at the picture, then he said: "Van Alstyne! Oh, by all means. You must arrange it somehow."

"Your grandmother is a fine old lady, and her grand-daughter has made a good portrait. May I ask if you had any criticism on that work?"

"No, I worked alone all summer. I am glad you like it. I ought to have done fairly well with it, for it was the second one."

"I see," was Mr. Frost's reply.

"Now I think it time that you looked at my studio," said Miss Henshawe, trying to pout.

"Why, surely. This is the new studio, Jess, we must say something very nice about it."

Miss Henshawe proudly conducted the whole party all over the apartment. Mr. Frost declared himself in love with the kitchen, and he related

some of his culinary experiences while out in Arizona.

Mr. Parrish, not to be outshone, gave his method of cooking Lobster a la Newburg in a chafing-dish.

Nan smiled and wondered what Grandma Wynkoop would say if she had heard these "paintermen" comparing notes on cookery.

Miss Frost drew Nan aside and talked over plans for next year. Or, rather, she told the girl she wanted to see her soon at her studio, when they would talk over plans.

"But, my dear Miss Frost; there is nothing to do but to go on as I did last year. Of course, I shall be a great deal better off now that I am living here with Clara."

"Come to me to-morrow at four. That is a good child. I have much to say to you. Don't forget."

"I won't," Nan answered softly.

Miss Frost went back to the others, who were admiring Clara Henshawe's new purchases. Mr. Frost set her mind at rest by assuring her that her cabinet was the real thing.

"There! I told you so," she said triumphantly to Mr. Parrish. "Mr. Frost ought to know if any one does. You are so jealous, Basil."

"Faith, and I don't blame him. It's a dream of a studio. I'm going to send you a couple of pieces of queer-looking pottery I brought with me. They will look well on that cabinet. There

is a piece of Delft which I want to send to you, Miss Wynkoop. With your name, I dare say you'll appreciate something from Holland."

Nan thanked him, though Miss Henshawe cut in before she had finished her polite little speech.

"Oh, Nan is Dutch. Nearly everybody up in Macedonia is Dutch. They have no end of stuff brought from Holland—old chairs, stout enough to have held a generation of burghers, funny, long, narrow mirrors, with a picture taking up half the space. Mrs. Wynkoop gave me one which had been in the Wynkoop family ever so long. She was so conscientious she said she wasn't sure that it came from Holland. But I have no compunctions. I say it did. I'll get it; it hangs over my dressing-table."

When the mirror had been duly admired, Miss Henshawe went on with her description of Macedonia.

"You ought to go there," she finished by saying to the Frosts. "It is like a place in a story-book. You would enjoy it particularly, Mr. Frost. You ought to stay in your own country for one summer instead of going to the old world. I enjoyed Macedonia, and I am going there again next summer."

"Really! Then I think I shall have to desert Paris," smiled Mr. Frost.

"You needn't be so sarcastic. You would enjoy it. And as for amusement, there is a great

deal going on. I really was very dissipated. The school-teacher took me driving quite often; I went to two ice-cream festivals and was invited out to tea a number of times. Then there is the sewing society; that's a function, I assure you. I sewed on the new carpet for the Presbyterian church, but I sewed it on the wrong side, or, rather, I sewed it on the right side, which proved to be the wrong side. A stern-visaged matron in a black alpaca basque ripped it out. She looked at me as if I were a creature from another planet. I never sewed on a carpet before; how should I know which side was the outside?"

"Is that all you did for the community in all the time you were there?" inquired Mr. Parrish. "You were there fully four weeks."

"I know I was, but I was urged to stay, and the Wynkoop family wouldn't have asked me to stay if they hadn't wanted me to. I did other things for the good of the community, Basil. I sang alto in the choir. I stood next the teacher, who is the basso profundo, and once, when Harriet Wynkoop had the headache, I played the organ. Oh, it is a great town, I assure you."

"I don't think it is just polite to make fun of Macedonia, Clara." This from Miss Minerva, who came from the kitchen just in time to hear the last words.

"Oh, Nan doesn't mind. She isn't a bit like

the Macedonians. She is as urban as if she had always lived in New York. Some of the Macedonians thought she was 'stuck up,' I fear. They think if you paint for your living you are queer and one-sided. You mustn't think that everybody in Macedonia is provincial, for it isn't so at all."

"That's right, Clara, fix it up. I know Miss Wynkoop's feelings are hurt, though she won't own it probably."

"No, they are not. Nan called my attention to a great many funny things. I repeat that my young friend, Miss Wynkoop, is quite urbane."

The Frosts rose to go when Miss Henshawe ended this monologue.

"Come, Teddy, Miss Wynkoop is tired and we must not keep her up. To-morrow at four, Annice."

"What does Miss Frost want of you?" Miss Henshawe asked of Nan as they brushed their hair together that night.

"I don't know, Clara."

"Depend upon it that something is in the wind. And let me give you a hint; if she wants to make any arrangements for you, you would better let her. It isn't well to be too independent."

"I am independent, and I can't help it. I was born so. I am glad, though, that I am independent."

"Humph! There is such a thing as having too much of a good thing. Good-night. I hope you'll sleep well in your new quarters."

Miss Frost was alone when Nan called next day, and she began at once to talk of ways and means, as she had promised.

"Nan, I want you to study with Van Alstyne."

"Miss Frost, there is no use in my crying for the moon. I beg your pardon. I don't wish to seem flippant, but it is simply impossible."

"There is nothing impossible about it. I saw him this morning, and I talked to him about you. He is a great friend of Theodore's and of mine. There is no reason why you should not study with him."

Nan flushed a deep red. "Don't place me in a position where I must say no to anything you want me to do, Miss Frost. That would hurt me more than I can say."

"My dear child, don't be silly. Excuse me; I should say don't be over-conscientious. It is a very simple matter. Your sister Harriet wrote me to place you with the teacher I thought best for you, and that she would pay for your lessons."

"But Van Alstyne! I have heard about his prices," interrupted Nan. "They are beyond Harriet's purse. She is the soul of generosity, but she has no idea how these first-class teachers charge."

"Please understand me Annice. I can make

a special arrangement with Van Alstyne. Both Theodore and I have sent many pupils to him, and—"

Nan shook her head. "No, Miss Frost, I really don't think I ought to do anything like that now. I'll keep on as I began, for the present, at least."

"You will give up that afternoon work, I hope, Nan. It is taking your strength, and you might rather spend your time in picture galleries."

"You mean my illustrating? I can't give it up. It doesn't take much time, and it really is quite a help. I did quite a little while I was home, and in one month I made twenty-two dollars. Really, Miss Frost, the work is very simple, or I could not do it at all."

"Are you going to Brooklyn as you did last spring?"

"Yes; I hope so. Mrs. Richardson is in the country now, but I hope she will want me when she comes back. That work helps me a little too."

It was Miss Frost's turn to shake her head. "It is bad economy. You might rather work with all your might while you work."

"If I help myself a good deal I can perhaps study here two years more instead of one. That is what I am hoping for."

"Oh, you poor child, I see you are bound to have your way. I won't torment you, but any

time you are ready to change your mind and go to Van Alstyne let me know."

When Miss Henshawe succeeded in drawing from Nan what Miss Frost wanted of her, she told her very plainly that she was a precious goose to refuse to go to Van Alstyne.

CHAPTER XIX.

NAN was thoroughly rested by her long summer at home, and she threw herself into her work with all her strength.

The illustrating for the *Headlight* went on, and while the returns were slight, Nan considered it well worth doing. Mrs. Richardson returned early in September, and she sent at once for her amanuensis. Nan was glad of this source of revenue, though she grudged the two afternoons a week. Still, even the most talented art student must live, and to live one must have some money, be it ever so little.

Nan had been fortunate in one respect. She had been particularly exempt from mortifying experiences which beset many girls whom she knew. But a most bitter one came to her early in her second year in the city. As Miss Henshawe told her, if she had taken Miss Frost's advice and given up the Brooklyn business, it would never have happened.

Soon after Nan resumed her work with Mrs. Richardson, her stepson, Vivian, came home. He had been traveling abroad during the previous

gear, and Nan had not known of his existence. He soon found it convenient to lounge in and out of his stepmother's boudoir while Nan was busied with correspondence and accounts or was painting menu cards. This last was a new use to which Mrs. Richardson had put her.

Nan was, of course, aware of Vivian Richardson's presence as he passed in and out, but she never gave him a second thought. She soon saw that he had given her many. "He wants to flirt, I suppose," she thought, "but I'll be so stupid that I won't pretend to see it." This plan worked very well for a little while, but the young man made so many bids for her attention that she could no longer feign blindness. One day under pretence of looking for sealing-wax on his mother's desk, he put a scrap of paper before her. On it he had written. "I love you. Where can I meet you? Pity me."

Nan's face flushed with anger, but Mr. Richardson mistook the signal. Quick as a flash she scribbled on the back of an envelope, "I despise you."

M. Richardson, who had taken a picturesque attitude, with his arm resting on the mantelpiece, read the words, and vowed a vow to have vengeance on the girl who had presumed to snub him. He was used to having his addresses met in a very different fashion. Who was this girl that she had dared tell him that she despised him? When he

was ready to make a dignified exit, he left the room, still nursing his wrath.

Nan finished her task as usual, but she felt disturbed. She was sure that Mrs. Richardson had seen the by-play. She wished she knew what had really happened, and she had half a mind to tell her. She concluded not to do so, however, and went home to pour her story into Clara's sympathetic ear.

That lady was rather inclined to be amused, and she thought that Nan had been too hard upon the young man.

"How could you resist any one with such a picturesque name?" she laughed.

"It's no laughing matter, Clara. I'll have to stop going to Mrs. Richardson unless he keeps out of the boudoir, and I hate to lose the money she pays me."

Meantime, Mr. Vivian Richardson had thought out his scheme of revenge. He delicately intimated to his stepmother that her amanuensis was "making eyes at him." A hint was enough for Mrs. Richardson. She flew into a rage and assured her son that she would protect him from the wiles of that forward upstart. This, with other names, equally misapplied, was hurled at poor Nan, who would not have recognized herself by Mrs. Richardson's description.

Mr. Vivian Richardson lighted a cigar and, assuring himself that revenge was quite as sweet

as it was said to be, went out to have a game of billiards.

Mrs. Richardson met Nan as usual and satisfied herself that the menu cards she had taken home to paint were satisfactorily finished before she opened fire. Nan was well into the week's accounts before Mrs. Richardson said, in icy tones :

"Miss Wynkoop, I am disappointed in you."

Nan dropped her pen and wheeled around. She did not say anything. Mrs. Richardson might refer to the menu cards, or, possibly, her accounts.

But the next words left no room for doubt. "I regret that you have so far forgotten your position as to try to attract the attention of my son."

Nan's head swam. For an instant she felt that she must throw the inkstand at her. Her mother's daughter in such a position! She had her temper under control in a moment, and rising at her desk, she said in fairly calm fashion :

"Mrs. Richardson, I have heard quite enough. It is your son, not I, who has forgotten himself when he presumed to try to attract the attention of a self-respecting girl. I should never have thought twice of his existence if he had not thrust himself before my attention."

"Oh, it won't do to take this turn. You are a poor girl, and it would no doubt be a fine thing

for you to attract the attention of a gentleman like Vivian."

"Gentleman! He has no claim to the name. I have been basely insulted in your house, Mrs. Richardson. I consider my engagement with you at an end. I won't tell you what I think of your son and of your treatment of me, for I don't care to put myself on a level with you. You may send a check for the amount due me to this address;" and Nan laid her card on the table by Mrs. Richardson's side and swept out of the room, a most irate young lady.

Mrs. Richardson rang for her maid and was helped to her room, where she indulged in what she called hysterics. It was a close enough imitation to frighten Treasure when he came up to see his Precious. When, at last, he gathered the story between Mrs. Richardson's sobs, he was unsympathetic enough to say that probably the girl was right, Vivian was an ass.

If the young lady with an unusually high color, who was on her way to New York, could have heard his opinion, it would, no doubt, have comforted her. She laughed several times over the affair, a "hystericky" laugh, as she owned to herself. She wished she was home with Miss Minerva; she would comfort her. The way seemed endless, but at last she reached the studio. Clara sat painting, but Miss Minerva was out.

"You are home early," Miss Henshawe ob-

served. No answer, and she looked up. "Oh, my dear Nan, did that old cat—"

"Yes, she did. Clara, I feel so humiliated. I can't stand it."

Miss Henshawe put away her paints and brushes; then she went over to the divan and sat down by Nan. "Now tell me all about it," she demanded.

Nan obeyed. She laughed sometimes and sometimes she cried a little before the story was finished.

"I don't see why you should care," was Miss Henshawe's verdict, as she stroked the Titian-red hair which she so much admired. "Of course the boy isn't worth minding, and as for the woman, I think you are even with her. Now put the whole affair out of your mind. Probably it is a good thing that it happened; you were tiring yourself too much by that trip and work. It cost you much more in strength than it was worth to you in money. I'm going to tease Minerva to give us something extra good for dinner."

When Nan talked the affair over with Miss Minerva after dinner, she told her she would not think of it again; Nan was not to blame, and she had conducted herself like a lady.

Miss Minerva and Nan were in the kitchen "doing" the dinner dishes; Clara was entertaining—which means quarrelling—with Basil Parrish in the studio. The sound of their voices rasped

on Nan's nerves. She would not join them, though Miss Henshawe came twice to call her. She couldn't join them; she was out of touch with them.

After a while she went to her little room, meaning to fall asleep at once and forget her troubles. But sleep would not come at her call. She lay awake till midnight going over the Richardson affair. Sometimes she laughed and the next moment she would bury her face in her pillow and sob. She felt wounded; she could not forget this, her first real trouble. She wanted some one to talk to—some one even more sympathetic than Minerva Henshawe. She wanted her mother. At that moment she loathed New York, and she would gladly have put it behind her. She tried to comfort herself by thinking of her work, but she did not care for her pictures then. She rose and lighted the gas and looked at them, but to no purpose.

"They are daubs, every one of them," she said. "I can't paint, and I don't care if I can't." She crept out into the studio. Perhaps her *chef d'œuvre*, the portrait of Grandma Wynkoop, would seem worth having done. But, no; grandma looked as if she might be saying some sharp thing. Yet somebody had praised it, somebody who ought to know when a portrait was good. "They say these things to encourage me," Nan said, as she turned out the gas in the studio and

went back to bed. "I ought to be teaching school this very minute. If not this very minute, nine o'clock this morrow morning. Oh, dear, what a pity that children grow up. I wish I were a little girl again."

She fell asleep after a while, but she awoke several times before morning, and went over the affair again. When she awoke in the morning, it was with a consciousness of a weight on her mind. She made a failure of eating her breakfast, and called down a scolding from Miss Henshawe for letting such a silly thing as that Richardson affair worry her.

Nan went to the art-school, and did her work in some fashion, she scarcely knew how. It was criticism day, and the instructor was in what the students were wont to call "a mood." He dispensed his remarks very freely, and when he came to Nan's easel, he made no comment for a moment. "It's coming," thought poor Nan. "I deserve it; I know I can't paint."

"Miss Wynkoop, there is no excuse for such work from you," he said curtly, and passed on.

She sat with bowed head, feeling as if she had been struck, when the girl whose easel stood next to her said, "That was a compliment worth having."

Nan raised her eyes, "A compliment?" she repeated. "I feel as if he had boxed my ears."

"You are very foolish. It was a compliment

to your every-day work, a great compliment. I wish he had said it to me."

It was time for the class to stop work, and Nan wearily gathered up her paints and brushes, and put them in her locker. She felt as if she never wanted to see them again.

A number of the art students were in the car she took. Ordinarily, she enjoyed the ride up-town, and did her share of the conversation, but to-day everything jarred on her. After a luncheon with Miss Minerva, she went to see Miss Frost, but found that she was out of town and would not return till evening. Nan stood undecided ; she did not want to go home, though there was some work to be done for the *Headlight*. She couldn't work ; there was no sense in making the attempt. She walked along in an aimless way, hardly knowing in what direction she went. After a few moments, she found herself passing a small church. Beside the door was the invitation, "Come ye apart, and rest a while." Nan went in and sat down not far from the door. One or two people, evidently strangers in the city, were looking at the windows. Now and then a quietly-dressed woman walked in, perhaps dropped on her knees a moment, and then went out again, the calm expression on her face proving the truth of the words over the door : "This is the house of God, the very gate of heaven."

Nan lowered her own head. She did not frame

any petition, but in some way she made known to the pitying All-Father that she was lonely and downcast, and that she needed help. When, after a moment, she raised her head, she did not leave the church. Presently the organist slipped before the organ and began his daily practice. The music soothed her, and she still kept her seat till the practice hour was over and the organist locked his instrument.

She walked home with a lighter step than she had come. Life was still worth living. She could look up, and out, and beyond. To Miss Henshawe's great relief, she did justice to her dinner, and when some artistic people called, she did her share of the entertainment.

When she went to her room that night she treated the pictures with the usual respect.

The first mail in the morning brought a check from Mr. Richardson, *père*, for thirty-one dollars. He explained that he had taken the liberty of adding twenty-five dollars to the amount due Miss Wynkoop. No doubt she had been much annoyed by the affair of Tuesday, and he hoped she would accept this little *bonus* as a testimony of his respect.

"He has even worse taste than I gave him credit for," said Nan, passing the note and check over to Miss Henshaw. "No doubt he means well enough. Do these people think that money is everything to a working woman?"

Nan returned the check, with a brief note, declining Mr. Richardson's *bonus*, and requesting him to send her a check for exactly six dollars, which he did by return mail.

Nan cashed the check and put the money in her well-worn little purse. That ended her acquaintance with the Richardson family.

CHAPTER XX.

As Nan neared her own door one afternoon she saw an old lady standing in the vestibule of the opposite house. Her hands were full of parcels and small satchels, and she carried in addition a large pot of sweet rose geranium. She seemed to be trying to find her way into the apartment house, for she peered at the names under the bells and carefully examined the number on the door, comparing it with a number on a slip of paper in her hand. Then she rang the janitor's bell, but to no purpose; evidently that functionary was out.

Nan watched her for a moment, than she ran across the street to offer her assistance. The little old woman's figure looked familiar, and as Nan spoke she turned, and said: "Will you tell me how to get into these pesky flat houses? I want to find my granddaughter, Annice Wynkoop. She's an artist, perhaps you have heard of her. I know this is the right number, or it ought to be, for the next one is 66. If 67 doesn't come next to 66, I'd like to know why. If I could find my spectacles, I'd read these names better; but I can't seem to make 'em out."

"Yes; I have heard of your granddaughter," said Nan. "The truth is, I know her very well, but I don't think much of her."

Grandma turned indignantly on the speaker, and then she did not need her spectacles to help her.

"Why, Nan Wynkoop!"

"Why, Grandma Wynkoop! How did you ever happen to drop down here. I'm so surprised I can't believe my eyes."

"I don't see why I shouldn't come to New York if I want to. It's a free country, ain't it?"

"Of course, I'm very glad to see you, but I wish I had known you were coming."

"Why? Your pa wanted me to write you, but I was afraid you'd make up some excuse and try to keep me to home."

"No; I wouldn't, only I would have met you, and you wouldn't have had so much trouble to find me. Come over to the flat. You are on the wrong side of the street."

Nan took the bags and bundles, but grandma wouldn't give up the flower pot. In a few moments Nan had the old lady resting in a large chair in the studio.

Both Miss Henshaw and Miss Minerva were out, so Nan had all the honors to do. She lighted the alcohol lamp and made tea for grandma, the old lady looking her approval.

"It's the best thing I've tasted since last night. I was so flustered that I couldn't eat my break-



"Why, Grandma Wynkoop! How did you ever happen to drop down here!"
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fast. Your ma put me up a lunch, but the cars jolted so that I couldn't eat. *He* wanted me to get out at Poughkeepsie and get a lunch, but I thought there was no use in wasting money when I had more lunch than I could eat in my bag."

"Who is *he*, grandma?"

"Oh, that's telling. Yes, I'll have another cup. That's a pretty teapot. Do you know what it cost?"

"No; but it probably cost a good deal. Clara is very extravagant about china, and she is collecting teapots. Won't you have something more? Now, lie down on this couch and rest."

"I never lie down in the daytime, you know that very well. The tea rested me. Do you know where the Henshawes get their tea? I wouldn't mind taking a half-pound of that to your ma. I am comfortable, I tell you. No, I don't want a footstool. My, how many jim-cracks there are in this room. I should think it would keep you busy dusting it."

"It wouldn't get dusted very often if Miss Minerva didn't do it. Now, Grandma Wynkoop, I want to know how you came, and who you came with."

"I came on the cars, of course. Did you think I walked?"

"Who did you come with?"

"Haven't I got sense enough to come alone?"

Couldn't your pa or your uncle David put me on the train at Macedonia?"

"I know you didn't come alone; and, besides, you said something about *he* wanting to get luncheon for you."

"It was the teacher, if you must know. Ain't he got a right to come to New York if he wants to?"

"Certainly, I have no objections. If you came with Mr. Bamford why didn't he see that you reached here safely?"

"Because I wouldn't let him. I told him that I didn't know how you would feel about his coming, and I'd come alone. He was mighty set about coming with me; but teacher or no teacher, I had my way. So he put me in one of those things with two wheels, with a man sitting up in the air behind, what do you call 'em?"

"Hansoms?"

"Yes; homely would come nearer the truth. I felt as if I was locked up in a cupboard with those doors shut in front of me. The teacher, he told the driver where to drive, and he gave him money, and away we went in great style, me a-jolting till I thought my bonnet would come off. When we got pretty near your number I told the man to let me out. But says he, 'the young man told me not to let you out till you were at the right place.' 'Never mind,' says I, 'what the young man said. You are dealing with the old woman

now.' He kind of grinned at that, and he opened the cupboard from behind some way, and I got out. I walked along till I came to 66. That number I saw very plainly, but I couldn't make out the 67 on the next one. Then I looked at the names, but I couldn't find any Henshawes. Just as I was looking for my spectacles you came along."

"You were on the wrong side of the street, grandma. You were on the side where the even numbers were; we are on the odd side,"

"I guess the whole thing is odd enough. I couldn't find a knocker nor a door bell or anything, but one bell that said janitor, and I pulled that for good, but nobody came."

"To-morrow, I'll show you how to get into an apartment house. It is quite an intricate affair. Are they all well at home?"

"Yes; all but your pa. He's got a felon on his finger, and of course, it had to come right in the time when he ought to be drawing his cord wood. Your pa is unlucky. Your ma sent you some jelly, and Charlotte made you a chocolate cake. The things are in my trunk up to the depot."

"I'll go out and get an expressman if you will give me your check."

"I've got it tied up in a corner of my pocket handkerchief, but the trunk ain't a-coming here, Nan."

"Why not?"

"Because I ain't a-going to stay here. I'm going to put up at the Astor House."

"The Astor House! Why it's way down town. You have got to stay here. There is plenty of room."

"No doubt you and the Henshawes think there is plenty of room, but I ain't used to sleeping in a folding-bed in a room about as big as a quart cup."

"You needn't sleep in a folding-bed. We haven't one in the apartment, for we all despise them. You shall have my room, and I'll room with Clara."

"No; I don't mean to put anybody out. I'm a-going to the Astor House. That's where your grandpa and I put up when we came down in 1864. We were at the Astor House four days, and I tell you they sent in a bill. But it was worth it. Such polite servants! If you just moved your little finger they seemed to know what you wanted. Oh, it was very stylish! I want to go there again, but I don't mean to stay there. I've just got my interest money, and I mean to have a good time once in my life. I'm going to Central Park, and to Greenwood burying-ground, and I'm going to take a carriage, a real carriage, not one of those hansom things, and drive around the town to my heart's content; I don't care if it costs as much as a dollar. I want to see the Brooklyn Bridge and the statue of

Liberty, and I mean to have a good time. Your grandpa and I had a good time. We ate in restaurants, and we heard Beecher preach, and we went to a show. It was East Lynne, and your grandpa and I both cried. We didn't let it get out in Macedonia that we'd been to a theater, for it wouldn't have done. Your grandpa was deacon in the church. Yes; we had a good time, but it cost considerable. I remember it was in the fall, just after thanksgiving, and we came down on the turkeys, and we went back on the yearling."

The Henshawes came in just then from a calling expedition. They were both pleased to see Mrs. Wynkoop. Clara's welcome was very flattering to the old lady. Miss Minerva was, of course, less enthusiastic, but grandma felt "drawn to her," as she afterward explained to Nan. The pot of rose geranium which grandma had been holding all this time, proved to be for Miss Minerva, who accepted it with cordial thanks. After an hour's chat, grandma rose, saying she must be going. Nan looked quite nonplussed, for she knew how strong was the old lady's will, and that if she had set her heart upon "putting up" at the Astor House, nothing short of lock and key would stop her. Nan followed Clara into her room and hastily explained the situation.

Miss Henshawe sat down on the bed and laughed till she cried. "Isn't it too funny? Oh, I

always said she was as good as a play. Don't worry, Nan; we'll circumvent her somehow."

"You don't know Grandma Wynkoop as well as I do."

"Leave her to me. I'll keep her from going to the Astor House to-night, and we'll trust to luck for to-morrow."

"I'm real glad you came to-night, grandma, for you'll see some one you are curious about."

"That Frost man who gets so much for his pictures, and goes out West to dig holes in the ground?"

"No, he is out West now, digging holes. I'm sorry that you can't see him. But Mr. Parrish is coming to dinner, and you'll find him very entertaining. If you'll tell me where Mr. Bamford is I'll send for him to come to dinner."

"Why, he's going to stop for me at half-past five to take me to the Astor House. He never puts up there, but he said he'd go if I was set on it, and I am. But perhaps he'll stop to supper."

"I am sure he will. Now you come into Nan's room and freshen yourself up a bit before dinner. It's quite a trip from Macedonia."

"I don't mind the trip. I've traveled a good deal in my time. My husband, Nan's grandfather, and I went to Buffalo twice. Is this where Nan rooms? Of course she'd have pictures and such stuff about, or it wouldn't be Nan. How is she doing? Is she improving?"

"Yes; that child is a genius. It is a pity that she has to think about ways and means so much. She illustrates for some papers, and does some other work afternoons. It tires her and takes the time which she might rather spend on her work."

"Humph! I thought Harriet was paying her way this year."

"Nan takes as little help as possible; she does quite a good deal toward her expenses. It would be a pity if the child should break down, for she has great gifts."

"It would be poor economy. I'll see if I haven't some money in an old stocking when I go home. I don't understand Nan, but, if she's bound to paint all her life, I want her to have a good chance. Sometimes I think it's better to give your money away while you are alive, and can see it do some good, than to leave it for folks to quarrel over."

"I am sure you are right," Miss Henshawe assented. "Poor Nan is having rather a hard time, though she won't own it. She is very independent."

"She takes that after me. I would have been a regular new woman if I had lived now. I don't know but I might have been an artist. Don't tell anybody this; it is between you and me."

Grandma was smoothing the crimps, so Miss Henshawe could indulge in the smile which would not be controlled.

"How is Nan having a hard time?" grandma demanded, when the hair was arranged to her satisfaction. "I thought she was having a pretty easy time. She wears her good clothes every day, and does nothing but paint. Emma Anna and Charlotte work hard. Emma Anna has to fit all sorts of folks, and they are hard to suit. The thin ones want their dresses made so they'll look fat, and the fat ones want to look lean. I tell you, it is hard work. Then Charlotte has a hard school. I wouldn't teach school; I'd go to the poor-house first. I didn't blame Nan when she up and said she wouldn't teach school. Harriet gets her living easy. She just sits there the whole day long and writes on library cards and gives out books. And she makes considerable more than Emma Anna or Charlotte. I wonder how much longer Nan will need to study before she can support herself."

"Oh, it will take a good deal of study, grandma. But when she does get able to work for herself she will make more money than all her sisters together."

Mrs. Wynkoop opened her eyes. "Mercy! She'll do 'most as well as those painting men she tells about. I didn't suppose she worked hard."

"She does, though. As I said, she has a hard time," Miss Henshawe went on, determined to make the most of her opportunity to win grandma's sympathy. "I believe I'll tell her about the

Richardson business," she said to herself; "it may open her purse strings."

Grandma was just as indignant as Miss Henshawe had wished her to be. When she had freed her mind a little, she began to trace the genealogy of the Richardson family.

"I shouldn't wonder a bit if they belonged to those Tim Richardsons I used to know when I first moved to Macedonia. They moved to Brooklyn, at least they moved somewhere down this way, and I heard they were making money, hand over fist. I always knew there was something wrong with them, and they wouldn't come to any good. I wonder what kind of a looking man this Ben Richardson was. Did Nan say?"

"No. Now grandma, you mustn't let Nan know that I told you about this. She would be angry with me."

"Goodness, child, I ain't so old that I can't keep a secret, but I'd like to know how this Ben Richardson looks."

"I didn't say that his name was Ben Richardson. I don't know what it is."

"It must be Ben. Tim was his father's name, and Ben was the oldest child. He'd be about old enough now to have a young upstart of a son. And it's just like the Richardsons to set a great deal by their family. Not that they have anything to be proud of. The Wynkoops have always been better people. Nan is good enough

for anybody. Why, she could have had the teacher just as well as not. Don't let her know that I told you this.

"Now that I think of it, Tim Richardson's sister married a man who was in a bank, and he stole from the bank, and they had a dreadful to-do over it."

Just here Mrs. Wynkoop's study of the Richardson family tree was cut short by Miss Minerva, who announced Mr. Bamford's arrival.

CHAPTER XXI.

MISS HENSHAWE'S little dinner was a great success, even grandma acknowledged that it was. Mr. Bamford accepted an invitation to remain, and as grandma afterwards remarked, "he was quite lively," notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Parrish was present. That gentleman fell a victim to Grandma Wynkoop's charms, and strange to say, she seemed to like him. He devoted himself to her, and gave her his arm to the dining-room. At first grandma was inclined to resent this attention, as a hint that her age made support necessary, but when she saw Miss Henshawe take Mr. Bamford's arm, she concluded that it was a New York "notion."

When soup was placed before her, Miss Minerva's own particular soup, she was about to decline it, on the ground that she did not need any beef tea, but as the others were being served, she concluded to partake of it. She was very anxious not to do anything which would mortify Nan, and she thought it would have been better could she have polished up her society manner by a brief stay at the Astor House. When in her own home she had possessed many times the value of the

worldly goods of the Henshawes, but there was something about the cheap little flat which impressed her. She enjoyed the dinner and the bright conversation which went on around her, and she felt that this was society. She was glad that Nan had such opportunities, and she was elated that the teacher could see her in such surroundings.

She did not go to the Astor House that evening; she slept in Nan's bed. As she said at breakfast, it gave her a spooky feeling to wake up and see a lot of queer faces looking down from the wall. Nan laughed and admitted that the effect might be uncanny if one was unaccustomed to it.

During the day Mrs. Wynkoop carried out her intention of putting up at the Astor House. Nan knew that she might as well yield first as last, but she exacted a promise that after grandma had done the Brooklyn Bridge, Greenwood, and the Statue of Liberty, she would return to the flat. Mr. Bamford would return to Macedonia in a couple of days, and then she would come back to Nan and Clara.

She kept her promise, and came back happy and important. She had seen all she wanted to see, and more. Mr. Bamford was a capital one to go around with; they had been to St. Paul's Church and she had sat in the pew where George Washington used to sit, and they had visited

Alexander Hamilton's grave in Trinity churchyard. Besides this, they had gone to Staten Island on the ferry and called on Mr. Bamford's folks, and had taken a long trolley ride on the island.

Mr. Bamford was to leave at midnight, but he told Nan he had one more treat in store for her grandmother. He wanted to take her to see Joe Jefferson. Did Nan think she would go to the theater? Nan replied that she thought she would, provided no one in Macedonia found it out. Mr. Bamford smilingly assured her that he would never divulge the secret, and Nan promised to have her grandmother ready when Mr. Bamford should call.

"It can't be any harm," said grandma, who had her bonnet on an hour before Mr. Bamford could reasonably be expected. "Clara says Joseph Jefferson is a good man, and that the play is all about things that happened in the Catskill mountains, our own Catskills. Nan, I shouldn't wonder a bit if Joseph Jefferson had boarded there some summer. I don't believe in going to the theater, but Clara says it is a real moral play. I wouldn't want you to go, Nan, if it wasn't. I wish Miss Minerva was going. Didn't the teacher ask her?"

"Yes, but she has seen it, and she seldom goes out."

"Clara is going?"

"Yes ; she is going."

"It's real nice of Mr. Bamford, but it will be expensive. I feel as if I ought to offer to pay my way and yours too."

"I think you would better not, grandma. I think Mr. Bamford really wants to take you. Of course it is quite proper for Clara and me to go to chaperon you giddy young people."

"The teacher is young. You always act as if he wasn't. Nannie, you ought to have taken the teacher. He's a nice young man, and he won't stay in Macedonia long. He is figuring on another place ; he told me so. He's been seeing an educational bureau man ; that's part of his business down. Do you think he has given you up?"

"I am sure he has. Grandma Wynkoop, if you ever say anything to him——"

"I hope I know what to say. Does my bonnet set straight? Ain't he late?"

"No, there is lots of time. I believe you want to go, grandma. Don't pretend that you don't."

"Well, since it's a moral play, and all about our own backyard, as you might say, I'd kind of like to see it."

They were a trifle late. The curtain had risen, and Rip was being roundly scolded by his rosy-cheeked vrouw by the time grandma was thoroughly settled. She swept the stage with Miss Hen-

shawe's opera glass, and remarked, "She'd never get the dirt out of the clothes by washing that way.

"She's a dreadful scold, but I don't know as I blame her," was the next remark. "Rip must have been dreadful trying. He must have had a tidy little property before he took to drinking.

"That's mighty good acting," Grandma Wynkoop said after a while. "I declare, I forget every once in a while that the whole thing ain't real. It's first-rate acting, because it might be one of those half drunk, half crazy Dutchmen, up back of Macedonia. Take them when they have been to town and are full of liquor—why Rip Van Winkle is the living image of them."

"You are right, grandma. It's good acting, for it is just like the Sissons when they are intoxicated."

"There's too much drinking in it to suit me. Ain't he going to reform and sign the pledge? Yes; he's saying he'll never drink another drop. How glad Mrs. Van Winkle will be. O dear me, there he goes again."

Grandma kept watching for the hoped-for reformation all through the play, and when the curtain fell for the last time she sadly remarked to the teacher that the play ought to have had a moral. It would have been so much better if Rip had reformed. She had been in tears half the time, and she was tired and weak from the

strain on her sympathies. Nan got her wraps on her and when they got her down into the street the air revived her.

Mr. Bamford left them at the door of their house, and rushed away to catch the midnight train.

"When are you coming home, Mrs. Wynkoop?" he asked. "Your son will want to know."

"Tell them I don't know. If my visit is out when Deacon Halleck comes down I'll go back with him. If not I'll stay till I'm good and ready to go back. I don't know but I might take a notion to stay down here and learn to paint," she added this for Clara's benefit.

Mr. Bamford laughed. "Well, good-by, grandma. Have a good time."

"I am. I'm real fashionable. Mr. Parrish is going to have a party in his studio, and I am invited."

"Invited? I should say you were. Grandma Wynkoop, the party is given in your honor."

"I'll tell the people in Macedonia how giddy you are."

"Don't tell them that I went to the theater."

"I won't, I promise. There! I must run for that car or I shall miss my train." He shook hands with the three women and rushed away.

Grandma certainly was very lively for an old lady of seventy. She partook of the nice little supper which Miss Minerva had ready for them,

and instead of laying awake on account of it, as many an old person would have felt it her duty to do, she slept the sleep of the just.

Mr. Parrish's party came off two days after the theater party. Grandma was full of curiosity about his apartment, and when she saw it she felt that it more than met her expectations. She considered herself quite a judge of studios, having seen Miss Henshawe's and Miss Frost's. They went early, at Mr. Parrish's request, so he could show her all over the place. And he did display all his treasures, from the desk which had once graced the palace of the doge of Venice down to the new tea-kettle in the kitchen. Nan and Miss Henshawe, having seen all these things, remained in the studio and examined Mr. Parrish's latest paintings. Nan thought it hardly fair of Miss Henshawe to say such scathing things of his pictures behind the artist's back, but that young woman assured her that what he didn't know wouldn't hurt him, and that she had to free her artistic soul.

"You're only mad because you haven't that desk yourself. I don't blame you; it's a dream."

"I'm so jealous that I can scarcely be civil to him. I have had serious thoughts of offering to marry him just so I could have that desk."

"I don't believe he would accept you; he would suspect you of some ulterior motive. I

wonder who is coming to-day. Perhaps it is to be only a family party."

"Miss Frost was invited, I know, and a couple of those long-haired friends of Basil's. He told them to come in all their war-paint, so that grandma could get an idea of Bohemia. I am more interested in what we are to have to eat than I am in the company. I wonder what one would call this function? A luncheon, I suppose."

"Grandma calls it a party."

"It's a good word, so comprehensive. Basil proposed giving a tea, but I told him that grandma had attended several. Here comes some one. I hope it is the boys. This is stupid, I must say. I've made fun of every picture and Basil is still pottering around the kitchen cupboard. I despise such a womanly man."

The new arrivals turned out to be the two artist friends. They remained in the dressing-room for some time, and when they came in they were attired in velvet blouses, well smeared with paint, and everything else to harmonize. Grandma put on her "specs" in order to get a good view of them. "The pre-Raphaelite brotherhood" was the name Miss Henshawe had given this little coterie, which included Basil.

"What do you think of them, grandma?" asked Miss Henshawe, without taking the trouble to lower her voice.

"Humph! I'd like to see their pictures."

"Oh, no, you wouldn't; they are much worse than Basil's."

Miss Frost came presently, and as she shook hands with her host she explained that her brother was detained, but he would probably be there shortly.

"Her brother! 'Sit still, my heart,'" said Miss Henshawe, turning to Nan.

The girl's breath came faster, but she controlled her color. "Thoroughbred" was Miss Henshawe's mental comment as she turned to tell grandma that the Frost man was coming.

"I'm real glad. I've heard so much about him that I should hate to go back to Macedonia without setting eyes on him. How did he happen to be here? I thought he was out West."

"I heard his sister say that his coming was a surprise to her."

Just then Miss Frost took the chair next Grandma Wynkoop. "I was so surprised to see Theodore this morning. He rushed down on some business and goes back day after to-morrow. Mr. Parrish met him in the street and invited him to his—— What shall I call it, Miss Henshawe?"

Miss Henshawe shook her head. "Nan and I have been wondering. It all depends on what he gives us to eat. Oh, here come some more people! I hope Basil has plates enough to go around."

By this time a dozen people gathered in the studio, and presently the summons came to the banquet.

"It's a spread," said Clara to Nan; "Basil has outdone himself. I hope there will be a flaw somewhere, or he will be so puffed up with pride and conceit that there will be no managing him. Look how pleased grandma looks in her seat as guest of honor. She's a social success; there's no denying the fact."

There was no flaw in the luncheon, to Miss Henshawe's disappointment. Afterward the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood sang trios, and then Mr. Parrish performed on the guitar.

Miss Henshawe told Miss Frost that she always wanted to turn her back on him when he put that green ribbon around his neck and "touched the light guitar." He played very well, though, and received much applause.

Mr. Frost did not come in till the festivities were nearly over. It was impossible to get away from contractors, as he explained to Mr. Parrish. Nan thought that that gentleman bore up bravely under his disappointment.

Mr. Frost made his way over to Miss Henshawe and Mrs. Wynkoop. "I should have recognized you from Miss Wynkoop's portrait," he said, when he had been duly presented.

He could not have made a more unfortunate remark That portrait like her!

"He has done it now," whispered Miss Henshawe, and Nan, who was talking to the pre-Raphaelites, had the same thought. "What a good time Miss Henshawe was having with Mr. Frost," was the next thought. The pre-Raphaelites were uninteresting at their best, and to-day they were simply stupid. Nan was glad when Mr. Parrish carried her away to look at some swords and yatagans which had just been shipped to him.

Nan saw nothing of Mr. Frost after he had greeted her, but he walked home with her, and as he bade her good-by at her door he said he would call on Mrs. Wynkoop with his sister the next evening.

When Nan repeated the message, Mrs. Wynkoop merely said "Humph!" She could not forgive him for calling her portrait life-like.

"Ain't Mr. Parrish got any folks to do for him?" she asked. "It seems kind of lonesome to live that way. I should think that his sister or his mother would keep house for him. Perhaps, though, he is an orphan."

"Oh, no. He is well blessed with relatives. I can't imagine his people coming here to 'do, for him, nor his wanting them. Why, bless you, grandma, he is a regular old maid. He loves to live like that."

"I thought perhaps he hadn't much means, but that party must have cost him a pretty penny."

"It did; caterer and everything, but he can stand it. The Parrish family are as rich as you please. They are great swells, Boston people. His sisters and mother have no patience with Basil's vagaries. He always was queer. I've known him long before either of us came to New York. No, grandma, we are not engaged. I see you want to ask that. He likes Nan a great deal better than he likes me."

Grandma did somewhat unbend her dignity when Mr. and Miss Frost called the following evening. She could not resist Mr. Frost, who was in his most genial mood. They sat on a couch in a corner, and she gave him her views on Rip Van Winkle. He listened with the most respectful attention, though Nan knew he was suffering from a desire to laugh.

When Miss Frost said they must go he proposed that they go to hear Irving the next evening. "I want Mrs. Wynkoop to see him in the Bells. Let us all go, we'll have a regular party. I'll leave for the west a few hours later. It won't make any material difference. You'll go, Miss Wynkoop, and you Miss Minerva, and Miss Henshaw? and I'll answer for Jessica. No one must disappoint me, for it is the last fun I shall have for some months. I shan't come east again till spring."

Mrs. Wynkoop was a total wreck before the end of the evening. Nan was a little anxious, and

she asked her if she would like to go home. Her grandmother gave her an indignant no. She was enjoying herself, what would she go home for?

"You take it so seriously, grandma. Try to remember that it is only a play."

"You'd better advise me. Any one would think you were my grandmother instead of my granddaughter: There, I've lost a lot, talking to you."

"I fear it is too much for her," said Mr. Frost, turning to Nan. "She said a good deal about moral plays, and I thought I'd like to have her get an idea of the ethical influence of the stage, of which we hear so much. I'm sorry now, that I didn't take her to see something cheerful—some comedy for instance."

"Oh, tragedy is more in grandma's line." I think this won't hurt her. She is having a very dissipated time. I feel that I never knew the real Grandma Wynkoop till she came to New York."

"Yet you painted what you will perhaps allow me to call a speaking likeness. My dear Miss Wynkoop, please don't look at me as if I were taking too much upon myself, but I wish you would study with Van Alstyne. I have wished it ever since Miss Henshawe showed me your work. I know that you are in earnest about your art, and as a friend of art and as your friend I presume to advise you."

"I can't go to Van Alstyne at present, Mr. Frost, though I do appreciate your kindness and your sister's."

"It isn't kindness, Miss Wynkoop," he answered lightly. "We have prophesied great things of you, and we want to be able to say to the world, 'I told you so.' Shall we have another day up the Bronx next summer?"

"I hope so," was all Nan could say, for the curtain rose, and grandma said "Ssh!"

Grandma showed the effect of late hours when she took her place at the breakfast table next morning. She admitted that she was tired; but she wouldn't have missed Irving for all one year's interest money. She had a great deal to say about the ethical influence of the stage for the next few days, and she did not seem to mind if all Macedonia knew that she had been to the theater. She even went so far as to say that she wished the minister had been there.

Deacon Halleck was coming that week, so Mr. Wynkoop wrote, and added that he would feel safer if his mother would come back with the deacon. The old lady had a mind to stay longer to assert her independence, but she really was tired with sight-seeing, and she made her preparations to go back with the deacon.

"I've had a good time," she said as she waited in the station with Clara and Nan. "I've stood it well, too, as well as a woman of fifty. To think

of the Welsh rabbits I have eaten, and never a touch of dyspepsia. It's wonderful. I'm glad I bought one of those chafing dishes. It will be company for me. When I get lonely and think about New York, I'll just cook something in it, and it will bring the whole thing back to me. I wonder if the deacon is getting that trunk checked all right. He is very long about it."

Miss Henshawe, thinking that Mrs. Wynkoop might have a last word to say to Nan, went to see about the check.

"There, I thought she'd take the hint. Annice, I have been thinking about you. You are going to be a good painter, and you ought to have a fair chance. How much did your Aunt Annice Woodward leave you?"

"Three hundred dollars."

"Well, I guess the Wynkoop side can do as well by you as the Woodward side. I'm going to put aside three hundred dollars, and I shan't say what I'll do after that is gone. But that will take you through this year, won't it?"

"Oh, yes," cried Nan, feeling that a great burden had been lifted from her shoulders.

"I want you to study with the Van Alstyne man they all rave over, and try to learn as much as you can for your money. I came to New York more on your account than anything else. I wanted to see what kind of people these painters are. I like them, for the most part. They set

a great deal by you, and they tell me they expect you to make your mark yet. There, don't try to thank me. You're welcome. If you weren't you wouldn't get any of my money. There come Clara and the deacon. Yes, they've got the check. You are a nice girl, Nan, and I'm satisfied with you. You are different from the other girls, but somehow I like a little variety. Yes, Deacon Halleck, I'm ready to go back to the country. Don't you think the air feels like snow? Perhaps there'll be sleighing in Macedonia."

CHAPTER XXII.

NAN began to study with Van Alstyne in January. It was her grandmother's wish that she should give up all her outside work for the remainder of the year. Grandma herself would "foot the bills," as she wrote Nan. Perhaps after this year was up, Harriet and Nan could stand for the expense, but grandma wanted to see how much Nan would improve during six months' study with the great Van Alstyne.

Nan felt like an athlete preparing for a race, who leaves off every weight. It was such a relief not to be obliged to think of anything but her own legitimate work. Her home with Miss Henshawe and Miss Minerva was very pleasant, and she told herself that never a girl had a better opportunity to learn to paint. Her friends believed in her and their faith was an inspiration. The only trouble was that their belief in her was too strong; they expected too much of her.

As she told Miss Henshawe, she was so afraid of Mr. Van Alstyne that she knew she couldn't paint at all. She found, however, when she bearded the lion in his den, that he was not so formidable as she had feared. She worked away

for a few days, with very little attention from Mr. Van Alstyne. She was perishing to know what he thought of her work, as she told Miss Henshawe.

"Oh, he'll tell you quickly enough. It's his way to keep quiet if he is satisfied with you. Probably you paint so well that he'll never say anything till he tells you that he can teach you nothing more."

"Don't make fun of me, Clara. This is life or death to me."

"It's more than that to me, my work, I mean. It's bread and butter. Dying is cheap enough; it is living that costs. I've had three pairs of shoes since July, and these are getting shabby. I haven't had an order for a miniature in an age. Oh, dear! Times aren't what they used to be. We'll never get to Paris, Nannie, if we don't save our pennies."

"Save them? I shall have to earn them first. I'm not exactly discouraged, but that Van Alstyne man makes me feel about three years old."

"It isn't a comfortable feeling. You used to have the same sensation when Mr. Frost talked to you."

"Used to? I haven't gotten over it. If I didn't know that he is a gentleman I should feel sure that he makes fun of me sometimes."

"Mr. Van Alstyne and he are very chummy, aren't they?"

"Yes; Miss Frost says they studied together years ago in Paris."

"By and by I shall be able to point to you and say with pride that we studied together in Paris. Dear me, I wish we had the money that some waste. I know more girls than I could mention in a week who go over, and they never amount to anything. It seems that they have to go there before they will believe that they can't paint. If you had the money that Basil Parrish has spent in the pursuit of art with a large A, you might be giving Van Alstyne lessons."

Nan laughed. "Do you suppose he will keep on indefinitely? Not Van Alstyne, I mean Mr. Parrish."

"I suppose so. He has money enough to spoil him."

A few days after Clara came in the studio, where Nan sat, writing letters at the desk. "Prepare yourself for a shock," she said.

Nan turned white. "Is it bad news?"

"You poor child, no. I just saw Miss Frost, and she says that Teddy writes that Van Alstyne said that Miss Wynkoop——"

Clara sat down and began to draw off her gloves in a leisurely manner.

"Clara, tell me what he wrote. It's cruel to keep me in suspense."

"He wrote that Miss Wynkoop is a very good-looking young woman."

Nan threw a pillow at her. "Of course he said nothing of the kind, Clara." This in a particularly wheedling tone.

"He said, to quote Miss Frost's words, which no doubt were entirely or nearly *verbatim et literatim*, that Miss Wynkoop is his most promising pupil."

Miss Henshawe threw the pillow back at Nan. "Think of that, Miss Annice Wynkoop. He has some bright pupils, not to say anything of those who have gone and distinguished themselves. The gifted Miss Wynkoop!"

"There is no use in pretending that I am not pleased, for I am. I am very glad to know what he thinks of me."

"And wasn't it nice of Teddy to tell what he said? I dare say that the same Teddy made him tell. So, there."

"Oh, nonsense, Clara. The same Teddy, as you are pleased to call him, has probably forgotten all about us, and he won't think of us again till next summer."

"'Wull ye no come back again?'" sang Miss Henshawe, as she went to her room to put away her hat.

The winter flew by on wings. Nan worked with all her strength, but her mind was at rest, and her environment was so pleasant that she did not fail in health as during the previous winter. Van Alstyne seldom praised her work. Occasionally

he would say, "Keep on, keep on. We shall see what we shall see." Those who knew his way assured Nan that these few words from him were equivalent to a gold medal from anyone else. So Nan took courage and did her best.

Miss Frost did not hesitate to say what she thought of Nan's progress. The two were very good friends. Miss Frost made room for Nan to work in her studio, and the girl painted there many an afternoon. Miss Henshawe always insisted on talking when they worked together, and Nan found her flow of language somewhat distracting.

Mr. Frost returned in May, and from that time he came and went. The Bronx party was repeated, and many other expeditions were made. Perhaps there was more fun than sketching, but as Clara Henshawe would often say, it was getting late, and it was time they had some relaxation after the labors of the winter.

Nan stayed in the city and worked all through June. When Van Alstyne left New York for the summer she half reluctantly packed her belongings and started for Macedonia. She would have worked all summer had there been an opportunity.

When she parted from her friends it was with the assurance that they would meet during the summer. Miss Henshawe was to spend some time in Maine, as usual, then she would repeat her visit to Macedonia. The Frosts were to spend

the summer in the Catskills ; they had leased a cottage at Onteora. Miss Frost exacted a promise from Nan that she would visit them there, and Nan, in her turn, promised to show them Macedonia and its suburbs.

Nan was given quite an ovation when she took the train for Macedonia. Of course, Miss Henshawe and Miss Minerva were at the station to see her off, and Miss Frost arrived soon after they did. Mr. Parrish and another of the pre-Raphaelites came with flowers, books, and magazines, and Nan suffered from embarrassment of riches. Mr. Frost was not there, whereat Miss Henshawe wondered openly. Nan owned to herself that she was disappointed, though she told Miss Henshawe that there was no reason to expect him.

Nan settled herself comfortably as the train pulled out of the station, and began to cut the leaves of the novel Mr. Parrish had left her. She read a few pages, and was resisting the temptation to look at the last chapter to see "how it came out," when a gentleman stepped in the aisle. She looked up to see Mr. Frost.

"I am so glad I found you. I walked through several cars, and feared that I was to be disappointed. I had business in Newburgh, and I started a little earlier than necessary so that we might travel together."

Nan moved her bag and other belongings and made room for him at her side. She kept con-

gratulating herself that she was perfectly self-possessed, but at the same time she was so glad to see him that she wondered how she managed to keep the fact from him.

Of course they talked art ; that was a foregone conclusion ; but they talked of other things as well. Mr. Frost pretended to be greatly surprised because Nan did not play tennis nor golf, and had never mounted a bicycle.

"You simply must do all these things when you come to Onteora. We are going to live out of doors there. We shall do everything but sketch. This summer is to be devoted to play."

"I wonder what I can offer to attract you and Miss Frost to Macedonia. Perhaps if you were not so sure that you will not paint, you might find something worth putting on canvas. We are quite proud of our own particular hills."

"I'll make one picture, at least, for I promised your grandmother that I would."

"I wonder what place it is she wants you to paint? I can't remember that she ever noticed the scenery."

"I don't know what the picture is to be about, but it is to be a landscape, three feet by two and one-half feet ; and I am to take it to New York and have a handsome frame put on, and send it back to her with my bill. I had considerable curiosity as to what she meant to do with the picture, but she would not tell me anything."

"It is too bad for you to be bothered with such a commission. Of course you won't think of undertaking it. Grandma has no idea what she asked of you."

"Don't, I beg, take my commission away from me. I most certainly shall paint that picture, and have it handsomely framed. By the way, grandma said I was not to tell you. I didn't think when I began."

"I shall never tell. I suppose she did not want me to know of it for fear my feelings might be hurt. She thinks it a pity that I don't do scenery."

"You would better stick to painting faces. Take my advice. If I dared, I would tell you all that Van Alstyne told me. But I won't. You have no curiosity, I hope. Is the next station Newburgh? It can't be possible. We shouldn't be well out of Harlem yet. I won't have time to tell you what Van Alstyne said, for I can't go any further. But I'll tell you either when you come to Onteora or when I go to Macedonia to paint the 'scene.' Good-bye, Miss Wynkoop; I hope to see you again soon."

Nan held the pre-Raphaelite's novel upside down for a half an hour or more, while she sat absorbed in her thoughts. Perhaps she was trying to guess the subject of the landscape which Mr. Frost had to paint.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IT was haying time, and Mr. Wynkoop was busy, so Charlotte drove Billy to the station to meet Nan. Billy had reason to thank his lucky stars that Charlotte seldom drove him. She was a teacher and accustomed to being obeyed, and she checked Billy's head up till he had quite an air, and by dint of clucking at him constantly and applying the whip to him judiciously she managed to present quite a fine appearance as she drove through the town. Nan never attempted any style with Billy. She usually loosened his check-rein and let him browse at will while she mused or read the papers which she had brought from the post-office. This was an excellent plan. Nan knew, and Billy knew, that she could not make him hurry, so if she appeared to be interested in the *Evangelist* or the country paper so that she didn't care to drive fast, it might deceive people on the "turnpike," and it certainly was a harmless deception.

After Nan and Charlotte had left the town behind them, Nan got out and loosened Billy's check rein.

"I can't bear to have so much style, Charlotte.

I'm afraid that Billy will blame me for his discomfort."

Charlotte laughed. "If you and father hadn't spoiled Billy it would have been better for everybody concerned. You may as well take the reins. He knows you are here and he is prepared to nibble all the bushes between here and home. You are looking well, Nan. Much better than last year."

"I am perfectly well. I could work the year around, only I want to come home."

"I hope you won't get so fond of the city that you won't always want to come."

"Why, Charlotte Wynkoop!"

"You really are a distinguished looking girl. It must be something innate in yourself, for you can't give your clothes credit for it. Emma Anna will have to sew for you; you must be down to your last dress. You haven't had any clothes in a long time."

"It doesn't make much difference. The people I see most don't expect me to dress, and they take me just as I am."

"Grandma says you are a great belle."

"Grandma was a belle herself. She really was giddy. You wouldn't have known her, Charlotte."

"Yes, she told us that she went to the theater. But it was not allowed to get outside of the family. Sometimes I wish she had never gone. She talks a great deal about the ethical influence of the

stage, and as for Rip Van Winkle, if she has told the whole thing over once she has told it forty times. She is very proud of you, Nan."

"There she is now," said Nan, as grandma appeared at the gate. "Isn't she spry? She is a marvel, and with her seventy years."

"Yes; she can get up and down stairs faster than I can. She makes me think of what Washington Irving said about Dutch women. If they get thin and dried up as they get old they live forever. Well, grandma, here is your favorite granddaughter, safe and sound."

"How are all our folks?" was Mrs. Wynkoop's first question.

"All well and happy, and everybody sent love to you."

"Any of them coming up this summer?"

"Yes; Clara will come, and the Frosts will not be far away."

"Ain't he going to Paris this summer? I thought he said he always went to Paris. He said that when I asked him to come to Macedonia. I wanted to be polite to him, for he took us to the theater. It must have cost him a pretty penny, too. Clara says they charge like everything for those boxes."

"Oh, I fancy he could afford it."

"Has he got money? I suppose he makes as much as four or five times what the teacher makes. You seen the teacher yet, Annice?"

"No, grandma. I haven't been home two hours."

"I thought maybe you had seen him in the village."

"I can wait till I see him, I think."

"I wonder if he has a notion for Clara, perhaps."

"Perhaps. I hope so, if it suits them."

"Do you suppose Clara would be willing to settle down here?"

"I can't imagine such a thing. She would rather be dead than live outside of New York."

"Perhaps the teacher will try to get a position nearer New York."

"I'm sure I don't know, grandma. I hope he will get what he wants. I wish him good luck in all he does."

Nan dropped easily into her old place at home. Sometimes she could not realize that she had been away at all, and the New York life seemed like a dream. She busied herself about the house, giving a helping hand here or there, wherever she saw it was needed. She made a great effort, as she confided to Harriet, to "stir up" Emma Anna and Charlotte. It was not an easy task, but she did now and then succeed in getting them out of the old ruts for a little while at a time. If she could only get them to change their scene! But if she spoke to Charlotte about trying to secure another position, she was met with the reply that it would be very foolish to make a move; she was

used to people and things in Macedonia, and she disliked to meet new people and try new ways.

"It's actually a wonder that Emma Anna doesn't make dresses after the fashion of fifteen years ago," Nan said to Harriet, after one of her futile conversations with her older sisters.

"I suppose she would if people would buy them," was Harriet's reply. "Her dressmaking answers every purpose that society does for other people. The arrival of a new *Delineator* is as good as the opera. She really does take an artistic pleasure in making dresses, poor Emma Anna. She makes her dresses well, there is no denying that."

"Of course she does. Just think what prices she could command in New York. Harriet, I wish we could move them all down. Do you think they would be contented?"

"I know they wouldn't. Father and mother would be completely stranded, and yet I believe they would mind the uprooting less than Emma Anna, and Charlotte. I should go wild if I lived such a jog-trot life. Mine is dull enough, but compared to theirs it is wildly exciting. Statistics go to prove that more than half the cases of insanity among women hail from farmhouses. The monotony of such an existence, it is claimed, affects the brain more than the noise and whirl of the city."

"Miss Frost often speaks of the women who

live alone in the city—those who keep house alone. She says they always get queer and talk to themselves. I used to wish, winter before last, that I could be alone. But really, Harriet, I often think that it might be practicable to take a small house in Brooklyn and all live together. You girls could work there as well as here, and you would realize so much more for your labor.”

Harriet shook her head. “No, Nan, for once in your life your calculation is poor. We are a great deal better off here, poor as we are. There are so many things here on which we can put no money value. It is hard on you to be the only one in the city, but it will have to be so. You will work at your art all the year and in the summer you will come to us. I feel quite well satisfied about you so long as you are with the Henshawes. By and by, when you are a successful painter, we will come down, one or two at a time, and bask in your glory.”

“If there is ever any glory to bask in you may thank yourself for it.”

“Oh, no. I have done very little for you yet. Grandma came to the front early in the year and took all your expenses on herself. She has a hard task laid out for you this summer.”

“What is it?”

“A portrait of Grandpa Wynkoop. She has an ambrotype, and she wants you to enlarge it and dress him in modern clothes. She said if

you could do that she'd almost feel like paying your expenses for another year."

"She ought to send it to the girls who make crayon portraits from photographs. It is more in their line. I'll get Clara to paint a miniature of grandpa, and grandma can wear it as a breast-pin. He was a handsome old man, and in that old-fashioned dress he would make a fine miniature. However, I'll try it—I'll try anything that grandma wants me to do. She has been very generous to me, and what makes it seem all the more generous is that she considers painting *fol-de-rol*."

"Oh, no she doesn't. She really has a great deal of respect for the profession. Grandma thinks a great deal of the mighty dollar, you know, and she never tires of telling what fabulous prices some artists command. Then, too, I believe she loves art for its own sake," added Harriet, laughing. "She sometimes says that it is quite likely that she would be an artist if she were young now. Oh, grandma is a very progressive young lady! She likes society, as she calls it, and she is anxious to have Miss Henshawe and the Frosts come. She did all her other visiting early, so she would be here when the fun was going on."

The portrait of Grandpa Wynkoop proved to be a hard task, but Nan accomplished it in a manner to suit even grandma's high ideas of art.

She hung it on the wall of her room and proudly said that she wished Van Alstyne could see it.

She handed Nan a roll of bills, and, nodding her head mysteriously, told her that she might as well put that money away toward her wedding clothes.

Nan was so surprised that she couldn't reply for a whole moment; then she said: "Why, grandma, you would better let me spend it for a winter dress to work in. Clara will need the wedding gown long before I will. Mr. Bamford seems very anxious to know when she is coming."

"The teacher ain't the only man in the State of New York, is he?"

"No."

"I ain't referring to the teacher at all. I have given up that affair. I see that you and he would never have made it go. He's too masterful. You are like me, you have a will of your own. Your grandpa wasn't one of those masterful men; he was always reasonable, and he let me advise him for his good. If you get a husband as good as Jonas Wynkoop you'll be lucky."

"But I don't expect to have any at all, grandma. As Clara says, she and I are wedded to our art." Nan's eyes twinkled as she waited for the reply. It was short but expressive.—

"Fiddlesticks!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

NAN had postponed her visit to the Frosts' at Onteora for one reason or another, till Miss Frost lost her patience. At last, in August, she sent for Nan, saying she expected her to answer the letter in person before the end of the week, or she should come after her. If Miss Henshawe was there she must come with Nan.

Miss Henshawe was there, and upon receipt of Miss Frost's message she immediately began to pack her trunk, and she also partly packed Nan's. When Nan went upstairs she found Miss Henshawe in a thin wrapper, with her hair hanging down her back in a braid.

"I'm packing," said she, "and I'm going to Onteora to-morrow morning. So are you."

"I can't go so soon. I must have my white gowns laundered, and Emma Anna was just saying she must do quite a little sewing for me before I can go."

"Let the sewing go. It won't take long to have the dresses laundered. I'll wash and iron them myself if you'll wear them after they are done?"

Nan laughed. "I see you are anxious to go.

Perhaps we can get away on Saturday. I think it will be safe to write Miss Frost to that effect. But I must say, Clara, that your haste to get away isn't complimentary to Macedonia."

"I never thought of that, Nan. I hope I haven't hurt your feelings. Of course I like all your people, but it stands to reason that I like you best, and I am not going to leave you. I wonder that you care so little about going to see Miss Frost. I should think you would be anxious to see her."

"You needn't put so much stress upon the pronoun, Clara, I understand you."

"Now, I want to see him, and I confess it freely." Miss Henshawe made a dive down to the bottom of her trunk, and when she came up for fresh air, she went on, "I believe you are afraid of Theodore Frost."

"I am afraid of no one, man or woman, Clara Henshawe. I can't quarrel with you, for you are my guest, but I can leave you, and I will. I'm going to make a pudding for dinner."

"Have hard sauce, there's a dear good child," Miss Henshawe called after her.

The Frosts had a very pleasant cottage at Onteora. They rented it of a well-known literary woman, who was spending her summer abroad. It was simply, but comfortably furnished, and the brother and sister were making themselves very much at home.

Miss Frost told Nan that she felt like shaking her for making her wait so long, but she forgave her and showed her to a green-and-white chamber.

"I knew your preference for green, so I gave Miss Henshawe the pink one."

"If there is any one color more unbecoming to me than another, it is pink," said Miss Henshawe to Nan when Miss Frost had gone down. "But I'm willing to be made a martyr of if your æsthetic eye is suited."

The days in the cottage, or rather the days outside the cottage, were delightful ones, for they were seldom indoors unless it rained. The weather was what Miss Henshawe called ideal, and they made the most of it. When they weren't playing tennis they were taking long tramps through the woods, or, if golf did not attract them, it was archery.

Miss Frost met the girls at breakfast one morning with a long face. "Isn't it a shame? Theodore has to go to New York this morning to see about some tiresome contract. He may not get back till Thursday. I could cry."

"So could I." Mr. Frost came through the low window. "I'll be back as soon as I can, Jess, you may be sure of that. I expect you to be good children and give an excellent account of yourselves when I come back."

"I shall be afraid, Teddy. You may be away two nights, you say."

Mr. Frost gave a long whistle. "I hadn't thought of such a thing as your being afraid, Jess. Why should you? There are four of you, counting the cook. If it will make you feel more secure, make the second girl stay at night."

"Oh, I wouldn't feel secure if I had seven women. I never feel safe in the country unless there is a man in the house."

"Miss Wynkoop is smiling. I know she thinks you very foolish. Do you expect to be afraid, Miss Henshaw?"

"I'm the biggest coward in the world."

"I'm sure that Miss Wynkoop isn't cowardly. I'm going to put you in charge of the garrison, Captain Wynkoop."

"I'll defend it with the last drop of my blood," returned Nan, shouldering Mr. Frost's umbrella with a martial air.

"There, girls, you are safe. Miss Wynkoop will take charge of you. It's time I was starting. All get your hats and walk to the station with me."

The first night passed without anything to alarm the timid ones. Miss Frost congratulated herself and the others that they had lived through the night."

That afternoon the cook told Nan that there had been an attempt, a few nights before, to rob a cottage not far away from theirs. Nan asked her not to tell Miss Frost, and promised that she would sleep "with one eye open."

Miss Frost made the tour of the cottage at least twice, to see that all the doors and windows were locked. Next, she looked under all the beds and in all the closets. This done she commended herself and guests to Providence, and the house was soon quiet. For some reason Nan could not get asleep. When, at last, she lost herself it was to dream of burglars and defenceless garrisons. It was nearly two o'clock when she awoke with a start. She had heard nothing, yet she found herself putting on her bedroom slippers and slipping a loose wrapper over her head. No one heard her as she passed the other chambers. The housemaid's closet was at the head of the stairs. Nan softly opened the door and took out a broom. Of course nothing was wrong, she told herself, but there was no harm in taking the broom.

The parlor, library, and dining-room were connected, and they were separated only by portières; there were no doors. Nan made her way through the parlor. Nothing was wrong there, but she pushed on through the library to the dining-room door. The heavy portière was drawn across the doorway, but she saw a faint glimmer of light. Her heart was knocking against her ribs so that she could almost hear it, but there was no going back now; she must know why that light was there. In a moment she was peering into the dining-room. Two men were kneeling on the

floor, with their backs toward her, and they were packing the silver into a bag.

Poor Captain Wynkoop! She did not hesitate for more than a minute or two, but it seemed to her that she was an hour in making up her mind what to do. No doubt these men were armed, and if they heard her they would shoot her. Life seemed very sweet to Nan just then, and she was tempted to slip away upstairs and let the burglars have the silver.

Just then there flashed through her mind the text of the last sermon she had heard in New York.

"And the Lord said unto him, What is in thine hand? And he said, A Rod."

The lesson drawn from the text was that we should use the means at our disposal. All this went through Nan's brain in an instant. If one had only a broom, then one should use a broom. The next instant she found herself darting forward, still noiselessly. The broom came down on the candle and put the flame out before the two men knew what had done it. Nan dropped the broom, and it fell with a noise. She ran into the library, meaning to hide somewhere, but she fell over a chair and made more noise. Oh, would the men go, or would they follow her? No, they were getting out of the dining-room window.

Nan began to feel queer; she must go upstairs. She wondered if people felt this way when they

fainted. She really ought to see if the men took the silver.

There was a step on the piazza. Were they coming back? No, someone was putting a key in the latch. Nan struggled to her feet. "Who is there?" she asked.

"Theodore, of course. Is that you, Jess?" still fumbling with the key.

"No; it's Annice. You can't get in. The door is bolted."

"Annice," Mr. Frost repeated the name as she had given it. "Annice, what are you doing down here? Is anything wrong?"

She sank down on the hat rack. "Look in the dining-room, there were burglars, but I frightened them, I think." She spoke in jerks. "Go quick and see."

"I'll see to you first. Why, child, you are a heroine. Don't faint, Nan, I'll open the door. Do you feel better? Dare I leave you to call Jess? You poor child."

"Look in the dining-room, please. I'm better now. But do be careful. Perhaps they haven't gone, after all."

Mr. Frost came back in a moment with a glass of wine. "Drink this," he commanded, holding the glass to Nan's lips. "They have gone, but the floor is strewn with silver. There is no doubt that you had real flesh and blood burglars. Are you better? Brave little Captain Wynkoop! I

knew you would defend the garrison. What did you do to the enemy?"

Nan laughed. "I poked a broom into their candle, and they ran. Then I upset something in the library, then I heard your latchkey."

"Excuse the pun, but you made a clean sweep of it, Miss Wynkoop."

Nan by this time, thanks to the wine, was quite herself, and she began to be conscious of her wrapper and her braided hair.

"I'll go up now. Please lock all the windows. I'm nervous. I didn't know I was so cowardly."

"Who is it that says a brave person is frightened after a danger? You need to be looked after. I'm going to call Jessica. Indeed I shall."

Miss Frost came down in a moment. She was some time taking in the situation, but when at last she did, she literally fell on Nan's neck.

"You brave little Nan Wynkoop," she cried. "Oh, you poor child, you tremble yet. I'm so sorry. It must have been a terrible strain."

By this time Miss Henshawe appeared at the head of the stairs, and demanded to be told what had happened.

Miss Frost told her in as few words as possible. And added, "Don't come down; we are coming up."

"I want to see Nan and be sure that she really is not hurt. We might have been murdered in our beds," Miss Henshawe wailed.

"Let me go to her. She has hysterics sometimes," said Nan. "Really, Miss Frost, I am quite myself."

Nan went up to Miss Henshawe, and Miss Frost called her brother down and together they went through the whole lower story and the cellar.

It was almost daybreak before the household was settled again. The cook wondered why everybody was late for breakfast. The silver had been put back in its place and the dining-room bore no traces of last night's confusion.

Nan heard so much about her bravery that she begged Miss Frost not to let anyone say anything more to her. She had done nothing but her duty, and she did not deserve any praise.

The affair, however, had given Nan a severe shock. For several nights she would wake up in a fright and sit up in bed, trembling with fear. She would not get asleep again till day began to break. It was no wonder that she did not wish to be reminded of her exploit.

Miss Henshawe thought the whole circumstance very romantic. It was just like a three-volume romance that Mr. Frost came just as Nan was about to faint.

At this juncture Nan would indignantly interrupt Miss Henshawe by declaring that she didn't faint; she never fainted in all her life.

"Yes, but you would if he hadn't come just as he did. I never saw you look prettier than you did

when you came up the stairs. Your eyes were big and shining and your hair was all curled around your ears and—”

Nan had heard all she could stand, and she took up her tennis racquet and left Miss Henshawe to finish her description to herself.

Mr. Frost, who was lying on the lawn with his cap over his eyes, sprang up as Nan approached.

“I don’t know how I guessed you were coming, for I didn’t hear you. Are you ready for a game? It isn’t too hot for you?”

“Oh, no. I am so wildly anxious to become a good tennis player that I don’t mind the temperature.

“When you come to Macedonia I shan’t know how to entertain you. I shall have to take you to see the chickens and little pigs. Oh, yes, we can go to drive the cows home. I hope you are not afraid of cows. I am. I never see one of our own mild creatures that I don’t feel impelled to yell and take to my heels.”

“I’m not afraid of cows, but we’ll take a broom along as a precautionary measure.”

“Please don’t say anything about those miserable burglars. I wish they had never come.”

“Why should you? It was a beautiful incident, and it deserves to be preserved as one of the legends of Onteora. Barbara Frietchie is nothing to it. If I were a poet I would write an epic relating the heroism of one little Annice Wynkoop,

who, with her trusty broom, put two bold robbers to flight."

"I don't see why everybody calls me little Annice Wynkoop. That is the name I go by in Macedonia. If it isn't that, it's the 'youngest Wynkoop girl.' I'm not little. I am five feet, five inches in height, and I weigh nine stone."

"I beg your pardon. I did not realize that you were such an imposing young woman. Hereafter I shall stand in awe of you. When I write the epic I shall not fail to add these facts. There comes Miss Henshawe. What spirit moved her to come out here? I fear the afternoon sun will be harmful."

"I am very glad to see her," said Nan, with much dignity.

But Miss Henshawe declined to join them. She didn't propose to work during vacation, and if playing tennis on a hot day was not work she would like to know what it was. So she settled herself comfortably in the summer house and the game went on.

"You forget about Grandma Wynkoop's landscape," said Mr. Frost when they sat down to rest. "You need not fear that I shall have any leisure time on my hands while I am in Macedonia."

"I have bad news for you. I know this will be a blow to you, so prepare yourself. I think that grandma has changed her mind about the landscape. She gave me an order for a 'fruit-piece'

some time ago, which I promptly executed. The size of that work of art was exactly three by two and a half feet, which leads me to think that she has substituted it for the 'scene.' I also discovered that this picture is to be a gift to the minister."

"Do you call that fair, taking my custom away from me?" asked Mr. Frost, fiercely. "I promised to tell you all that Van Alstyne said about you, did I not?"

Nan nodded. "I am not curious. Few women are, you know. It is only men who have much curiosity."

Mr. Frost seemed amused. "I sha'n't tell you yet. Perhaps if you are good I'll tell you when I come to Macedonia."

"I'll be good. Mercy, I had no idea it was so late. Jennie is ringing the tea bell on the back porch." Nan instinctively put up her hands to her back hair. "And there is Miss Henshawe in a fresh white dress."

Nan rushed away to don one of her white dresses, and Mr. Frost followed more leisurely with the racquets.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Is not Mr. Bamford rather épris with Miss Henshawe?"

Mr. Frost asked the question apropos of nothing in particular. He and Nan had started to go to the tennis court "cross lots," but he had suddenly become tired, he said, and sat down on the stile that led into the apple orchard while he rested.

"Your Macedonian hills are almost too much for me. The Macedonian nymphs walk with such a rapid pace that I almost get the apoplexy when I try to keep up with them. You didn't answer my question, Miss Annice. I asked you if you suppose there is anything between Miss Henshawe and Mr. Bamford."

"They are engaged."

"Are you sure—very sure?"

"She told me herself."

"May I throw up my hat? I'm so glad that he is engaged to her; I feared that he was engaged to you."

"We never were anything more than friends," said Nan, demurely.

"Since you are not engaged to him, perhaps

some other nan may have the right to ask you to become engaged to him."

"No man has such a right." This with much dignity.

"We'll call it a privilege, then. Has another man the privilege to ask you to be his wife?"

"That depends on who the man is." Nan's voice trembled, poor child.

"This man loves you very dearly. He began to love you that evening when you unconsciously made a picture of yourself against Jessica's red curtain."

"That man is so much wiser than I that he can't care for me long. I believe that he thinks he cares because he says so; but he would soon find that I belong to a different world from his, and he would be sorry that he—"

Nan did not finish the sentence. She turned and pulled at the daisies which grew about the stile.

"Am I too old for you, darling? I know there is a good deal of difference in our ages."

"I hate boys; I always did."

Nan's face was bent over the daisies as she spoke, but the next moment it was buried in Mr. Frost's tennis coat.

"Kiss me, Nan, that's a good child, and tell me that you forgive me for surprising you so. There was no other way to make you capitulate; you were so dignified. I believe I am young, after all."



Nan did not finish the sentence. She turned and pulled at the daisies which grew about the stile.—Page 272.

Annie Wynkoop.

"You act so, I must say," said Nan, who had recovered her composure a little.

"Where were we? That last move of mine rather confused my remarks."

"Behave!" said Nan, in a warning voice. "I had an idea that you were about to propose to me. Of course I may have misunderstood you, but—"

"Mischief! Tell me, Nannie, like the brave little woman that you are, that you really love me. Come, and we will go straying through the old world together and find it a Paradise."

The flush which had been coming and going in Nan's face came again, deeper than ever, as she put her hand in the hand held out to her. And again she was held against the tennis coat.

"I didn't think that you could be so—"

"So what, Nan?"

"So silly," she faltered, with her cheek against Mr. Frost's. "You say *such* things to me. They don't apply at all."

Nan held him away from her while she faced him. "If you ever—tire of me and wish that you hadn't—said all this to me, you can blame yourself. I warned you in time that I——"

Her eyes fell before the look in the other eyes and she did not finish the sentence.

"Come, we ought to go on, if we mean to play tennis this afternoon."

"I don't care for tennis. Let us stay where

we are. We don't become engaged every day."

"But what will your sister and Miss Henshawe think?"

"I'm not responsible for their thoughts, Miss Wynkoop. Jess might possibly guess if she tries hard enough. Sit still, Nan; they won't expect us now."

"Let us go home if you don't care to play tennis. I'm going; you may do as you please."

"Where thou goest I will go, beloved; and where I go you will go. Say yes, Nan. Never mind, you looked yes. I'll tell you where we are going—straight to Paris four weeks from to-day, and I sha'n't think about building bridges till we have ransacked every corner of the old world. How does that strike you for a program?"

"It sounds like a fairy tale. But I wish you to understand, Mr. Frost, that I am not to be coaxed by sugar plums. Do you suppose that I—like you any better because you have money enough to take me all over Europe than I should if you were too poor to afford any wedding trip at all? That sentence may sound somewhat involved, but I know you will understand me. It will be delightful to live the life you have planned, but I could work with you and for you if need be."

Mr. Frost grasped an apple tree for support. "Nan, will you bring me a little water and

sprinkle me with it? I believe I feel faint. Conscript fathers! She has said more than I ever expected to hear, more than she would have said if I had coaxed her all day. Why didn't you prepare me for this, Nan?"

Nan looked puzzled for a moment. Then she flushed a deep red, even to her ears. "Oh, I didn't mean—at least, that is to say—I was so afraid that you might think that I wanted you for your money, that I spoke my thoughts outright."

Mr. Frost seemed to enjoy himself immensely.

"Nan, you are forgiven, and I promise not to tease you more than I can help. There is no danger that I shall ever tire of you, you are too piquant and original. Besides, I love you as I love my own soul. Tell me, girly, how long since I supplanted Bamford?"

"He never was anything to me, but he almost made me think that I ought to marry him. His fidelity touched me, and everybody thought that I ought to marry him."

"Go on, please. When did you decide that you couldn't marry him? I want to know how long you have loved me. Honest now, Annice. You needn't mind confessing to me. It is all in the family, you know."

"It was the day you took us to Bronx Park; the first time, you know." Nan's voice dropped almost to a whisper. "That day and every day

since I have known what love is, and though I did not dare think that you really—”

“Oh, fill up these blank places, Miss Wynkoop. You didn’t really dare—poor child—think that I really—”

“Loved me,” faltered Nan, “but I couldn’t think of any other man. I could live alone all my life, and keep my secret to myself, but I couldn’t put any one in your place, or in the place I had made for you.”

“My little Nan! If I had only known! I wanted to speak long ago, but I thought you belonged to Bamford. Parrish—confound him—told me that you and the school teacher were engaged, and Jessica said she feared that it was so. If you weren’t exactly engaged, I feared that matters had gone too far for me to hope for a chance. I wish I had known.”

“I wish you had. I have suffered so over this. In your eyes I saw myself a silly girl who had let her tell-tale face betray her. I mean that Bronx day. After that I made myself behave. But I hated myself for weeks. I saw then that I had no right to let the Bamford affair run on, and I made myself understood. I believe Mr. Bamford liked Miss Henshawe all the time, but he was too obstinate to own it till just now.”

“My little Nan Wynkoop.”

“I don’t see why you will persist in calling me little. I’m not little, I’m tall.”

"You are just right."

"Don't say that I am just as high as your heart. I'm a good deal higher. Stand up. There! I come almost to your eyes."

"You are taller than I thought; quite a queenly height."

"Please don't say anything about 'A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,' etc."

"Nan, you are a regular tyrant. If you mean to nag me like this I would better beat a retreat while there is an opportunity."

"It is too late now. Besides, Mr. Bamford has deserted me. I fear you'll have to keep your contract, Mr. Frost."

"What is my name?" he asked, with his lips on hers.

"Teddy. And it's a most ridiculous name for a big man like you. I can't bear the name of Theodore, though!"

"Then you'll have to call me Teddy. It is a good name—quite as good as Nan."

"I admit that. Nan and Teddy, Teddy and Nan. It sounds as if we might be ten years old, I wearing a sunbonnet, and you a gingham 'jumper.'

"I'm going home. You may suit yourself. There come your sister and Clara now. Please, Mr. Frost, don't let them know——"

"I most certainly shall. Stop calling me Mister. It's ridiculous. I won't have it. If you

don't like my name invent one to suit. You are not lacking in imagination. Where are you going?" catching her by her sleeve.

"Please don't tell your sister now. That's a dear boy."

"You can't bind me over to silence by your blandishments. I want to see my sister. Would you separate a man from his sister?"

"See her. I'm going to take a short cut. I won't see them now."

"If you run away I shall shout, so that the whole neighborhood can hear me, 'There goes my beloved Annice, fleeing from her disconsolate Theodore!' You would much better stay, dear."

"Tyrant! I suppose I must. But spare my blushes, and I'll call you Teddy."

"Good child! Oh, I say, Jess, hurry. We have been waiting for you."

"Waiting for us? My dear Theodore! we have waited more than an hour for you. Where have you been?"

"Right here on this stile, and we have been getting engaged. Don't say anything to Nan, for I have promised her that no one but myself shall be allowed to make her blush." And Mr. Frost held his racquet before Nan's face.

"A good piece of work, Teddy. I won't say anything to Nan now, but perhaps she can guess how glad I am. I suppose you are off for a vacation with your wife under your arm."

"Yes; just as soon as I can make Nan get ready. We are off on the long trail, and we may not be back for a year. You'd better come with us, Jess."

"Thank you ; but I should only be in the way. I may meet you in Paris next winter. Is Nan going to paint, or have you spoiled her career?"

"Answer her, Nan."

Miss Frost and her brother were walking together, and Nan and Miss Henshawe were following behind. Miss Frost halted and repeated her question.

"I am going to Paris to study art," said Nan with much dignity. "Mr. Frost always prophesied that I would go."

"And I fancy that he had an idea that when you went it would be in a personally conducted party," laughed Miss Frost. "Theodore is a most transparent character."

Miss Henshawe had been so quiet that Nan was really worried. Could it be possible that Clara had really cared for Mr. Frost? If not, why was she so still?"

Nan was dressing for tea when Miss Henshawe tapped at the door.

"Well, Mrs. Frost," she began, "perhaps I am not a true prophet. Will you own now that Mr. Frost is interested in you?"

"It has that appearance," Nan replied with a

happy little laugh. "You have been engaged as much as a week, and you can't resist patronizing me a little, I see."

"Oh, there is nothing romantic about my engagement. The teacher wanted you first."

"Perhaps he thought he did, but I daresay he has forgotten it. You'll get along with him beautifully, and he'll thank his lucky stars that he isn't in Mr. Frost's shoes—"

"Where is the great Teddy? I forgot, I mustn't call him that any more."

"I don't mind, and he doesn't know it. He has gone back to the hotel. I told him he might stay and have supper in his tennis clothes, but he said they were not dignified enough for a man in his position. He will be back, though, I expect, later in the evening."

"The teacher and I will take ourselves out of the way. We are going for a drive. We'll never go to Paris together, Nan, and it's a shame. It's almost a pity to marry at all, and lose all interest in your work."

"I don't intend to lose my interest. I expect to do better work than I should if this hadn't happened. I can't help painting with Mr. Frost to encourage me."

"Wait and see. I predict that in five years you will have forgotten that you ever cared about paints and brushes."

"Wait and see," repeated Nan. "By that time I shall show you a picture worth doing."

"Do you want to know what Van Alstyne said?" Mr. Frost asked Nan as they sat on the porch that evening.

"Do you want to tell me? You have been threatening to tell me for a long time."

"You see, my child, I couldn't tell you without telling you something else first. I performed that duty this afternoon, and now for the story.

"It's this. Van Alstyne said to me that Miss Wynkoop had a future unless she married, and all the women who knew how to paint were sure to marry. I said Ah or something to that effect, but as you may imagine, I had my thoughts.

"'It all depends, of course, on the kind of man she marries.' Van Alstyne went on. 'If she should happen to fall into the hands—I think arms sound better—of an artist, who would help her instead of hampering her, she would astonish you.'

"Still I said nothing, and Van Alstyne had the impertinence to say, 'If you were not such a confirmed bachelor I might suspect that you were interested in Miss Wynkoop.'

"Of course I was shocked, and hastened to explain that I was interested in you because my sister liked you, and because I wished to see the cause of art prosper.

"But my remarks seemed to have no impres-

sion upon Van Alstyne, for he said, 'You would better marry her yourself, Theodore. I advise you to think about it.'

"So I began to accustom myself to the idea, till it lost its terror. I love art, and so, purely in the interest of art, I came to Macedonia, and you know the rest, Nan."

"It's a very good story, Teddy. I, too, am ready to suffer a great deal for art's sake. No doubt you have guessed that I intend to marry you merely for the opportunity to study in Paris."

"Of course I understand that. Remember we are to start in four weeks."

"But, my dear boy, I have to have something to wear."

"Nonsense! We'll buy those things in Paris. You are the last girl to make a man wait for wedding finery. I'll tell Van Alstyne unless you promise to be ready. Won't he be surprised when we walk in on him some fine morning? When are Miss Henshawe and Bamford to be married?"

"Not till some time in the winter. He has a position on Long Island, so Clara won't be obliged to live in Macedonia. She thinks I will stop painting after I am married."

"We'll show her how mistaken she is. Two are better than one, even in a studio, and if the two happen to be one, there is every reason why

art should flourish. I expect to see your pictures hung on the line at the Salon, my dear. Who knows but it may be a picture of Grandma Wynkoop? By the way, what does she think of this affair?"

"She said she saw it coming the evening when we went to hear Irving. I wish I had," said Nan boldly. "Is that a dreadful thing to say?"

"Dreadful? I should think it was. I don't see how you could help knowing the state of my feelings. I wanted to take the train for Macedonia and kill Bamford. Poor man, perhaps it would have been more merciful than to have left him to Clara Henshawe."

"Why, Theodore Frost, what an unkind thing to say. Clara is as good as gold, only of course, she does talk a great deal."

"Exactly. It was her conversational powers to which I had reference, my love. However, Bamford is quiet enough, perhaps he likes the opposite. For my part, I don't see how a man can change his mind so easily, and he seems to be a man of very strong will. I almost wonder he didn't make you marry him. Jess says she was afraid he would."

"I was almost afraid of it till that day we went sketching along the Bronx. I realized then that I was little Nan Wynkoop no longer, that I was very much grown up and knew my own mind."

"Just think of it, Nan, through that wretched

Bamford we have lost a whole year out of our lives. If he hadn't been hanging around you, 'sighing like a furnace,' I should have spoken that day. We'll never get this year back, not if we live to celebrate our diamond wedding. I'll never forgive the teacher. I hope Clara will talk him to death. Hanging is too good for him."

"Hush, there they come. I hear the sound of wheels."

"I don't, I hear the sound of Clara's voice. Do you suppose she'll stay out here? If she does I'm going back to the hotel."

"It is quite time you went, Teddy. The clock struck ten some time ago. We keep early hours here. Probably Charlotte is waiting to lock up the house, but she can't do it when 'the youngest' has a beau on the front steps."

"I suppose I must go, after that gentle hint. You haven't promised me that you'll be ready for Paris in four weeks."

"I will be ready. My devotion to art is such that—"

Mr. Frost prevented Nan from finishing the sentence. "It is quite time you said something about your devotion to me. Do you want me to be jealous of art? Mercy, here come Clara and Bamford! I'll escape this way. Good night, sweetheart, I'll see you early in the morning."

CHAPTER XXVI.

WHEN Nan and her husband went abroad on what he called "the long trail," they expected to be gone a year, but the year lengthened into five. Two flying trips were made to America, but they went back to take up their work again.

The years since Nan's marriage had been very full ones. There had been a great deal of hard work, but a great deal of fun had been sandwiched in between the work. They had tired of hotel life almost as soon as they began it, and then had followed a haphazard kind of housekeeping which would have driven some men to the verge of distraction, but which exactly suited Theodore Frost.

Nan and he painted together, and went on pleasure trips together when tired of work. They were the best of friends, despite the well-known saying that "two of a trade never agree." Nan realized that she did better work because of this partnership than she could have done alone. Van Alstyne's prediction was fast coming true, and this clever young artist's work was becoming known on both sides of the water. So much for the artist!

As for the woman, if her husband's verdict could be accepted, she was growing more charming every day. A perfectly happy woman is apt to be a beautiful one, and Nan's content wrote itself upon her face.

Into this ideal life had come a new joy—a little daughter. Nan, who always saw more in a face than anyone else, fancied that the tiny maiden resembled Grandma Wynkoop, and she gave the child her name,—Barbara.

The baby was reared in a happy-go-lucky fashion, and according to the predictions of many people, she should have died in early infancy. But instead of dying she thrived, and was a bundle of good nature. Most of her day was spent in the studio, for her mother could not be content if she was out of her sight for an hour at a time. As soon as she could creep she would make a "bee-line" for a palette, if left within her reach, and she was blissfully happy when her little dress was smeared with paint. Nan would ring for Babette, and tell her to put another dress on the child, then she would go on with her painting.

Of course Nan found the baby an excellent model, and she soon announced to her husband that "her line" would be children's portraits. She painted this precious child of hers so often that Mr. Frost declared that he would not have his daughter's good nature imposed upon.

They might have gone on in this happy, care-

free life for five years more, had not Mr. Frost's business called him home. Both Nan and he realized that it was time they returned to America. Nan longed to see the dear ones in Macedonia and show them her little Barbara.

So their canvases were packed and good-byes said to the artist friends who had come to seem so near. Once resolved to go, both Nan and her husband were impatient to reach home.

"I feel somewhat as Jessica does about New York," Nan said to Mr. Frost one evening, as they paced the deck, while the child slept below in the care of the good Babette. "I long to see the dear old city again. Ever since we started I have thought of that sail up the bay. Don't you remember how beautiful it is? Even the bay of Naples can't equal it. I can't understand why we didn't come before."

"You may as well restrain your impatience, unless you want to get out and walk. I can get along very well without seeing New York. I want to see Macedonia more. I want to ride behind old Billy, and I want to go after the cows. I want to sit on the stile at the foot of the apple orchard and make love to you."

"You needn't have all those accessories, Teddy. You have made love to me ever since that day you began it on the stile. I'll say that much for you, dear; you have kept up the love-making business right along."

"If we are not careful, Mrs. Frost, we shall become sentimental. What do you suppose your people will say to me for keeping you away from them so long?"

"It is a shame. I should have gone back before. Happiness has made me selfish, I fear. But it will be different now; I shall go home often. My people will want to see the baby as often as possible. She is the only grandchild. I don't know why 'the youngest Wynkoop girl' has so much more than the others," Nan added, half sadly, "They all deserve more than I, yet I have you, and baby, and my art. Yet, after all, what one hasn't had one doesn't miss."

"Don't be sad, little woman. We shall be in New York in less than twenty-four hours, so save your strength for Clara Bamford's greeting. No doubt she is standing on the wharf already, waiting for your ship to come in. For my part, I am anxious to see Bamford and know how he has borne up under that enthusiasm for five years."

"Teddy, you are uncharitable. Clara writes that they are very happy."

"They may be happy, but I know he is tired."

While the steamer which was carrying Mr. and Mrs. Frost was nearing New York, there was great commotion in Mrs. Henshawe-Bamford's small house in a Long Island town. The whole house was swept and garnished, but the studio received particular attention. Mrs. Henshawe-Bamford

was not so devoted to her studio as formerly, for Mr. Bamford and two very lively boys demanded much of her time. So sometimes art languished for weeks together.

But now the studio was the most important room in the house. All the old-time treasures, which the Philistine Mr. Bamford called "traps," were put in their old places, for it was Clara's object to make this studio look exactly like the one which she and Nan had shared.

"If she doesn't say it looks natural I'll never forgive her," said Clara, as she stepped back to get the best effect. "Yes, it is exactly like our old studio, and it ought to remind her of all those good old times. I hope she won't be too fine and foreign to appreciate what I have been doing."

Nan saw the studio before going to her room. "It looks like old times," she cried, dropping down on the divan. "There is the desk, the cabinet, the easel stands in the same place, and all the 'properties' are just where they used to be. Oh, Clara, why have you hung up those dreadful old studies of mine? But isn't the whole thing natural? It seems as if Basil Parrish must come in and walk around as if he owned the whole thing, and say disagreeable things about our last work. We saw a good deal of Basil in Paris. He was in the studio two or three times a week. He really paints very well now; even Teddy acknowledges that.

Now I want to see your boys. Is it really possible that you and I are so matronly and dignified?"

Clara's baby was brought in and duly admired. Then Nan demanded 'the Boy,' as young Alan Bamford was always called. He had been dressed in his best, and admonished to stay in the nursery and amuse himself with his best toys, till the guests should arrive. But there had been a shower that morning, and a beautiful mud puddle in the back yard was too much for him to resist. When Clara found him he was a most disreputable looking child. She felt like crying, and she told her husband afterward that the Frost baby looked like an angel in her flaxen curls and dainty dress, while the Bamford boy was as black as the "ace of spades."

Nan spent a few days with Clara and found her much the same. The old enthusiasm was there, but it was distributed over so many different objects,—her husband, her children, her house, her art, and a half-dozen clubs and societies for improving the town, that, as Mr. Frost said, she couldn't ride any particular hobby to death. She was genuinely proud of Nan, and she told her so a dozen times a day.

Mr. Bamford was making a success of his profession, and he seemed very happy in his home life. He still retained a little of his teachery manner, though he was greatly improved.

Nan was anxious to get to Macedonia, and she tore herself away from Clara. Old Billy was dead, and a new horse took them from the station. Nan could not see that her father had aged since she last saw him. Life had been easier of late, and as the burden of care had gradually lifted, he looked and seemed more like his old self.

There had been no changes under the old brown roof. Emma Anna and Charlotte still made dresses and taught school, and Harriet dispensed library books to the youth of the neighboring town. Mrs. Wynkoop "kept a girl" to do the housework, and she was able to spend more time in the Boston rocker. Grandma was still living, hale and hearty, and her pride in her favorite granddaughter knew no bounds.

As for the great-grand daughter, she insisted that there never had been such a child since the world began. That the baby was named for her was an infinite satisfaction, and she insisted that Wynkoop be added for a "middle name." The rights of the baby's admiring grandparents and aunts were completely ignored by the jealous great-grandmother. If she wanted Barbara every one else must stand aside.

"Nan," she said one day, "why don't you go into the attic and paint?"

"Why, grandma, I am taking a vacation. And who should I paint?"

"Who, indeed, but the two Barbaras? I'd like

to be taken with the baby. I'll wear anything you like, and I'll sit like a bump on a log for any length of time, if you'll only paint us. I'll wear my own hair, too, Nan."

Nan agreed, and the attic studio was made ready. Grandma was ready long before Nan had found her materials. The old lady took the child in her arms and held her in the most awkward fashion possible. The baby, who no doubt inherited an artistic instinct, snuggled herself comfortably against grandma's shoulder. The pose suited Nan almost exactly, and she began to work.

It was a labor of love, and her brush flew. Grandma was very good and patient and the baby was so used to being painted that she did not mind in the least.

Mr. Frost knew nothing of the portrait till, one morning, missing his family, he climbed to the studio. It was during the models' rest, and he went to inspect the picture.

"Bravo, Nan!" was his exclamation. "This is the best thing we have ever done, and we'll exhibit it. How would you like to be in an exhibition, grandma? That is what Nan will bring you to."

"Grandma was my first patron," said Nan, taking a tube of paint from the baby's hands. "I received twenty-five dollars for my first picture, and that is more than every artist can say."

"You have raised your price somewhat since then," grandma chuckled. "Art has paid you better than the Pine Ridge school would have done. And you have done well by your folks, Annice."

"I have one thing against you, grandmother Wynkoop," said Mr. Frost. "You wanted Nan to marry the teacher."

"That was before I saw you, Theodore."

"A very graceful speech, grandma. I should rise and bow my acknowledgments if I could get rid of this youngster of mine."

"Annice has done well, as I often tell the relations and the neighbors. She's got a man that worships the ground she walks on, and she can make as good a picture as the next one, I don't care who it may be."

"It is time to pose again, grandma."

"I suppose it is. Let Theodore stay and talk to me about Paris. I admire to hear him describe it. I'd like to go some time if I wasn't too old."

"I'll tell you what will be easier, grandma. You shall come to us in New York every winter and stay as long as you like. We are going to settle in New York, and you may look out for some great picture from us."

"Are you going to give up the engineering business?"

"Yes; I am going to give up the engineering

business. I'm a painter or nothing, now. Just remember, grandma, that you are booked for a long stay in New York next winter."

"I'll be sure to come. Macedonia is pretty dull in winter."

"I'll show you the portrait of the two Barbaras if you will stay for the spring exhibition."

"Don't be too sure, Teddy," warned Nan.

But it turned out as Mr. Frost had said. The picture which took the first prize the next spring was a portrait of an old lady with white hair holding a beautiful child. The picture was signed "A. W. F. "

Visitors sometimes noticed that the original old lady often stood before the picture. She was invariably accompanied by a tall man, who seemed to have a special interest in the portrait.

THE END

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